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Deborah Moggach on marriage

Divorce

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The tortured genius of Charlie Chaplin

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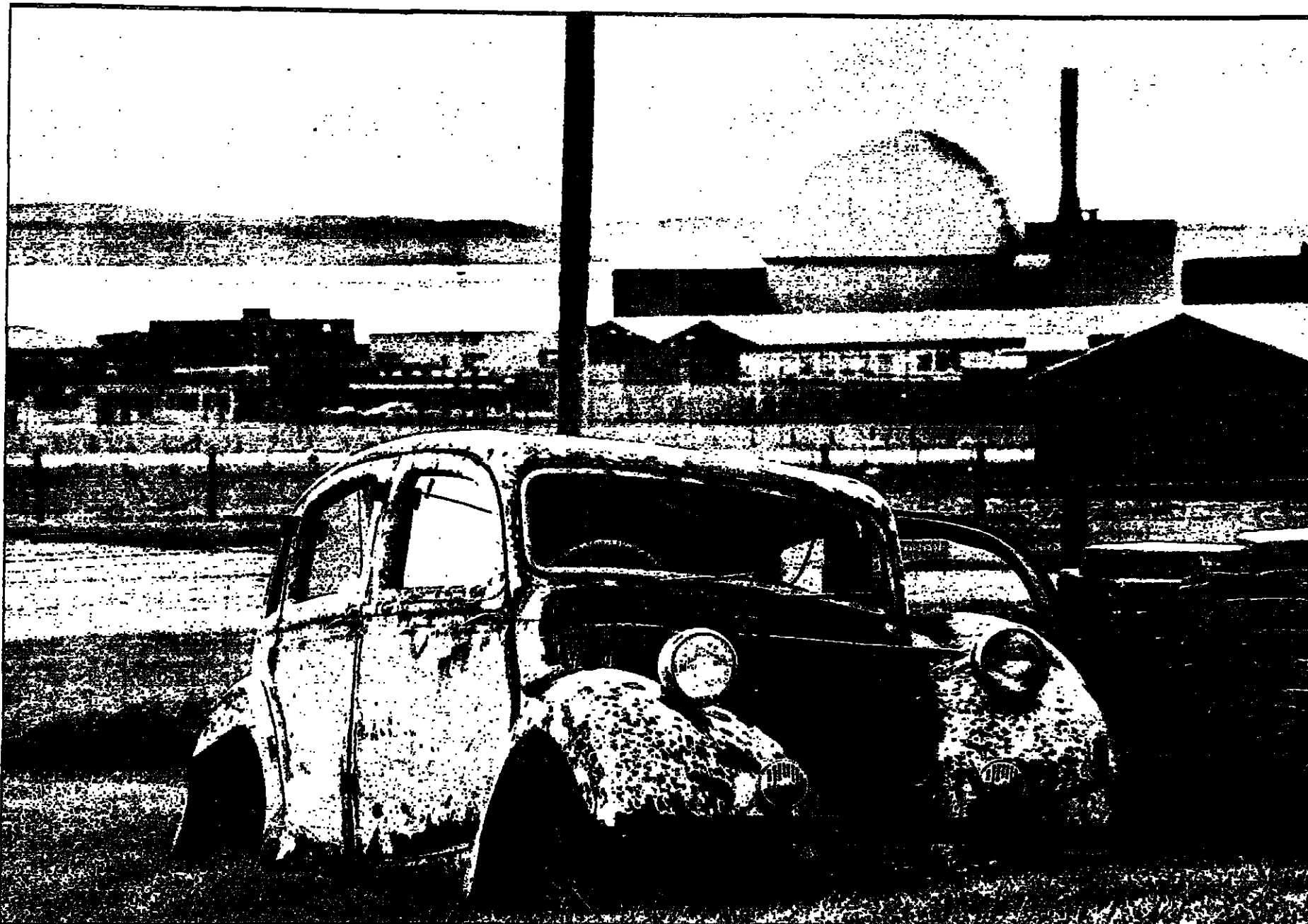


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Derby runners and riders

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Dounreay: Consigned to the scrapheap



Decrepit and well past its peak . . . and that's not just the car that has been dumped not far from the Dounreay nuclear plant

PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD

Scots: We'll go it alone

SNP delight over independence poll

**Ewen MacAskill and
Peter Hetherington**

THE Scottish National Party leader, Alex Salmond, triumphantly claimed yesterday that the tide was running towards the break-up of the UK when he launched the party's Scottish parliament election campaign against a backdrop of record support for independence.

Mr Salmond, at a conference rally in Perth last night, could not disguise his glee at a poll showing for the first time more than 50 per cent of

Scots supporting a complete break with England. An SNP strategist said Scottish politics had entered a new phase: "The independence process is under way."

If the SNP wins control of the Scottish parliament in next May's elections, it has pledged to hold a referendum during its fixed four-year term, asking Scots to choose between independence or remaining part of the UK.

Labour has been badly damaged over the past few months by a string of controversies, including disclosures this week about cash being squandered by North Lanarkshire council, but it shrugged

aside the poll. The Scottish Office minister, Brian Wilson, said the last time a poll showed a surge to independence, in 1952, it had been followed a few months later by the SNP winning only three parliamentary seats.

But the prospect of Britain breaking up in the face of a Scottish nationalist onslaught was last night accepted as a foregone conclusion by European leaders. Sir Malcolm Rifkind, the former foreign secretary, told the annual Scottish Tory conference in Glasgow that independence would send shock waves across the continent and beyond. The question was no longer academic.

Labour set out yesterday to upstage the SNP conference by announcing the closure of Douneay. But the SNP and its allies were confident of claiming victory for its long campaign against the plant.

Sir Malcolm said: "We have the potential to win outright

'We have the potential to win outright 50 per cent of the Scottish electorate'
Alex Salmond, SNP leader

would vote for independence, with 11 per cent against. As long-term for Labour in the winning is that 77 per cent believe the SNP stands up for Scotland consensually with only 10 per cent who think Labour does, and 63 per cent of those aged 18-34 would vote for independence.

The SNP is to adopt as its campaign theme Caledonia, a word used by the Romans for Scotland for his country, written by folk singer Dougie MacLean, who sang it at the rally.

At conference today Mr Salmond will set out policies regarding land reform, taking privatised water companies back into public control, and PR for council elections.

He will portray SNP policy as a combination of enterprise, by creating a good business climate, and a commitment to the social issues the party claims Labour has turned its back on. The SNP, he will say,

Mr Salmond was coy about predicting a date for asserting independence, recalling an SNP slogan in the 1992 general election that "Scotland will be free in '93". But he stuck by an earlier assertion that it will be within 10 years.

With the Scottish Parliament to be elected by PR, all parties agree it will be difficult to achieve an outright majority. Mr Salmond said yesterday he would refuse to form a coalition with the Conservatives. Given the level of hostility between Labour and the SNP, and with both on course to emerge as the biggest parties, that too is only realistic option for the SNP is partnership with the Liberal Democrats.

Leader comment, page 8

Fayed labels Diana's mother an 'English snob'

Jon Henley in Parts

EIGHT long hours into a mass hearing yesterday of witnesses at the scene where Diana, Princess of Wales, died, one man had finally had enough. The marble halls and sedate chambers of the Paris's Palais de Justice can rarely have heard anything like it.

The photographers who pursued Diana and Mohamed Al Fayed's son, Dodi, to their deaths in a Paris traffic tunnel were, Mr Fayed stormed during a break in the proceedings, "vultures" and "bastards." As for Diana's mother,

Frances Shand Kydd, she was "an English snob" who "lived on another planet".

Called by the investigating magistrate, Hervé Stéphan, in a final attempt to clarify what happened immediately before and after the fatal accident last August 31 in the Pont de l'Alme underpass, the closed-door hearing brought together some 35 people closely involved in the case.

Promising that "if I were not in a courtroom I would hang them all", Mr Fayed said of the photographers: "They caused the problem. They were like vultures around the bodies. The immorality, the inhumanity ... One day all

these bastards who caused this will be captured."

And Mrs. Shand Kydd had refused to talk to him, he complained. "People like her are on another planet. They are snobbish. She is a snob. It is English snobbishness," said the multi-millionaire owner of Harrods and the Paris Ritz.

"If she thinks she belongs to the royal family and doesn't want to speak to ordinary people like me, that is up to her. I am just a working-class guy."

Mr. Fayed's spokesman, Laurie Mayer, said his employer had had a hard week.

"There has been an orches-

trated and vicious campaign against him," he said. "I think what people are forgetting is that here we have a grieving father who is basically trying to find out all he can about how his son died."

Inside the gilded Salle des Crises, the atmosphere was somewhat calmer.

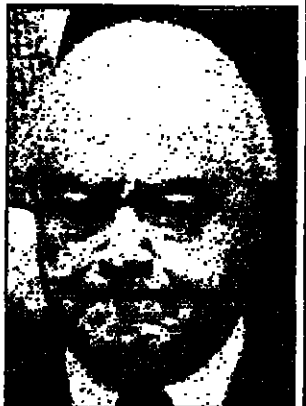
Convened for the occasion were nine photographers and a picture agency courier — who still face possible charges of manslaughter and failing to assist people in danger — and eight of the 10 eyewitnesses at the crash scene, including the first doctor and first two policemen to arrive.

As civil plaintiffs in the

case, Mr Fayed and Mrs Shand Kydd were entitled to sit in, as were the parents of Henri Paul, the Ritz Hotel's deputy security chief who died at the wheel of the black Mercedes with more than three times the legal alcohol limit in his bloodstream.

The hearing, known as a general contumation in France and not unusual in very complex cases, was aimed at establishing the photographers' role.

"It's the 40th time we have answered the same questions," said one of the photographers under investigation, Nikolas Arsov. "It's annoying, but what can you do? They have to do their job."



Outburst: Mohamed Al Fayed in Paris yesterday

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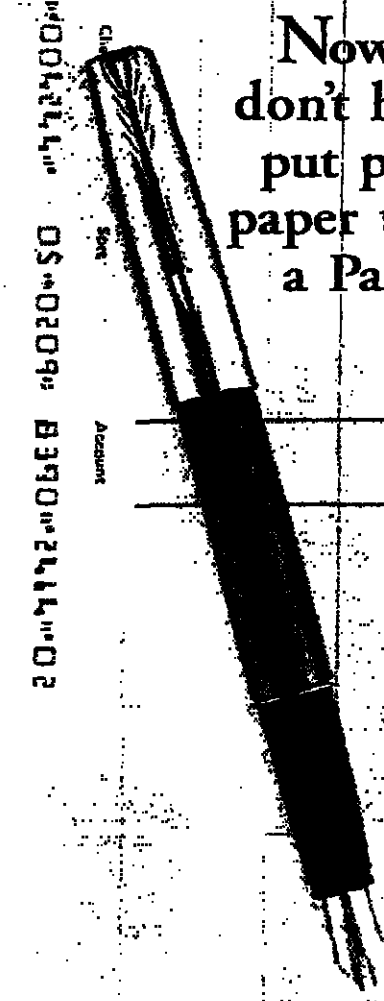
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Hoddle urged to make an example of striker

Play the game, says Sir Bobby

John Duncan
Sports Correspondent

THE pressure mounted on the England manager Glenn Hoddle to make an example of Teddy Sheringham yesterday as Sir Bobby Charlton said that if players were not disciplined enough to keep out of trouble it was "nonsensical" to believe England could win the World Cup.

"If our players don't have the common sense to behave themselves and act in a reasonable manner, it is absolutely nonsensical to think we have a chance of winning the World Cup," he said.

Hoddle called Sheringham in to explain himself yesterday afternoon as the squad gathered at an hotel in Burnham Beeches, Buckinghamshire, after pictures appeared in the Sun of the striker in a Portuguese nightclub at 6.15pm, just a week before the start of the World Cup.

Hoddle plans to see him again today before deciding what action to take. He cannot appear to be lenient with Sheringham after excluding Paul Gascoigne from the squad following similar revelations.

"Glenn Hoddle has spoken to Teddy Sheringham now that England's World Cup squad is together again," said the Football Association's director of public affairs, David Davies. "He is establishing all the facts of the situation. Glenn and Teddy will speak again before any further comment is made."

However, the attack from Sir Bobby, the most respected figure in English football and an official FA ambassador for the 2002 World Cup bid, could seal Sheringham's fate today. "I was really disappointed when I heard about Teddy and I hope he feels suitably embarrassed," said Sir Bobby.

Sir Bobby went on to highlight the differences between the attitudes of today's players and the iron discipline imposed by the 1966 manager, Sir Alf Ramsey, during the run-up to England's success.

The England players will remain at Burnham Beeches until they head for France for their opening clash in Marseille a week on Monday.



Teddy Sheringham: No decision until after another meeting with Glenn Hoddle today

PHOTOGRAPH: KIPPA MATTHEWS

Can you go clubbing, smoke, drink and play top football? Teddy Sheringham reckons he can

John Duncan on the gradual change coming over locker room attitudes

WHEN the former England captain Bryan Robson was a youngster, he wasn't banned from drinking by his club — he was told to do it. He was small for his size and the club gave him Guinness to build him up into the country's best player of the 1960s. Nowadays club doctors around the country are telling players to lock up the drinks cabinet and throw away the key.

Teddy Sheringham, and those like him in English football, who think they can sweat out the effects of alcohol in training with no harm done are seriously mistaken, says Griffith Edwards, an expert in alcohol and drug addiction, who has looked at the impact of binge drinking on athletes.

"Over-drinking can cause alcoholic myositis, which is a muscle wasting disease that particularly affects the shoulders and thighs," said Professor Edwards.

"Alcohol is a muscle toxin. The question that doctors need to answer is whether footballers and other athletes could be weakening their muscles by drinking too much. Binge drinking, which is more common among footballers, is particularly harmful. It's very harmful to the body system and upsets the body's metabolism."

The proximity of the World Cup also causes concern. Professor Edwards, who is also editor of *Addiction*, a scientific journal, claims that footballers should not drink for a minimum of 10 days before a major match. "A moderate level of drinking, like the odd glass of wine in the evening," he said, "can also affect morale because too much drink leads to depression. My only message to footballers would be to avoid drunkenness — it does not go with an athlete's job."

On the pitch, alcohol can have an immediate impact on performance. The main one is that it is a diuretic, absorbing body fluids and causing dehydration. This can be especially dangerous given that footballers can lose around 10 litres during the course of a match anyway.

A dehydrated footballer is weak in the latter stages of a game when most goals are scored, say experts. "Excessive drinking and athletic performance just do not mix," said leading sports medicine expert Hugh Montgomery, of University College, London. "Too much alcohol slows you down, leads to a swelling of muscles, par-

'Drink can have an effect on morale because it leads to depression'

ticularly in the legs, and this is very dangerous for footballers. Blood-sugar levels also drop and this makes it difficult for the body to mobilise its energy stores."

In the run-up to a major tournament, there is no doubt that drinking in excess is bad for you. Apart from the odd glass of wine, players should avoid drink for at least two weeks.

All of this is well-known to the football authorities. "You cannot survive in modern football if you don't train hard, eat properly, drink sensibly, and look after your body," says Alan Hodgson, the Football Association's head of sports medicine. "The contrast with the attitude and behaviour of professionals in other countries is stark. Germany's World Cup squad were recently given 72

hours off and every player chose to go for a few days with their family, armed with a compulsory personal fitness plan from the manager to be completed under pain of expulsion. All complied.

The problem in England is not just one of football. Players are normal human beings in a country where drinking is a deep-rooted part of the culture. The former Arsenal player, Paul Merson, a recovering alcoholic who admitted drink nearly ruined his life and career, says that drinking is a part of the tradition here.

"If you look at Italy or Germany, it's a different way of life," he said. "When English footballers finish playing, the most natural thing for them to do is go to the pub."

However, that is starting to change. Fitness trainers who frown on alcohol are ever more common, bringing a more continental approach to nutrition and alcohol to England. Arnold Longstaff, at Blackburn, is a prime example. Foreign players not trained in the card schools and drinking clubs of England have also shifted the dressing room norms here.

Arsène Wenger, who has just managed Arsenal to the Double, has banned the post-match pint for his players — the players' bar now only stocks soft drinks after matches at Highbury.

But the problem, says Dr Hodgson, may not be as widespread as the public believes. "Along with our doping control programme, we conduct breath tests for alcohol. In 500 tests we haven't found one single worrying case."

The process, according to Neville Southall, former Everton goalkeeper, is likely to be slow. "This game is played by working men who knock lumps out of each other and have a pint together after the match," said Southall. "At the end of the day, it's how you play."

Or as Teddy Sheringham is probably now wondering, whether you will play at all.

George Best: 'I used to go for training pissed as a fart'

Club: Manchester United
Age: 50
Booze shame claim to fame: Too numerous to list them all. Once went on an all-night binge after winning the Player of the Year award. He was found at 9am the next day asleep in the street, still clutching the trophy, by a policeman who put him in a cab. Among many incidents in nightclubs, largely provoked by other people, he once broke a woman's nose and was convicted of assault. What he says: "The drinking wasn't a problem at first. When you're 19 or 20 you can get pissed on a few drinks and it doesn't seem to matter. That's how it started with me. I had one golden rule: I never went out on a Friday night. I used to drink vodka and lemonade because it looked like nothing and if any nosy sod rang the boss up and told him they'd seen me drinking in a



Ray Parlour: 'I decided to put wild days behind me'

Club: Arsenal
Age: 25
Booze shame claim to fame: Parlour was once fined by the club for goading Tony Adams into letting off a fire extinguisher in Romford Pizza Hut on a drinking binge. The manager of the shop called them "animals". Parlour was sent home early, in disgrace, from an Arsenal trip to Hong Kong after fighting with a taxi driver. He also had a glass rammed in his face during a fight in a bar at Brixton, an incident in which he nearly lost an eye. He owned up to drinking too much in a national newspaper and last summer he reformed his drinking ways after starting a family. What he says: "I made a decision to put my wild days behind me, and work much harder on my game. Last summer I took a long, hard look at myself and decided I



did not want to be a 40-year-old looking back with regrets on my career. I was not too bad but I was not as focused as I could have been. I could have been in danger at one stage of wasting my career but now I am getting the rewards for hard work... The fact that Tony [Adams] has stopped drinking obviously means I don't drink so much any more either. I admit I used to go out too much — it's a part of being young. Of course, I still have a drink now and then but not nearly as much as I used to."

Whistle blown on Texaco lager plan

Mark Milner and Julia Finch

A PETROL station chain's plan to cash in on World Cup boozing has been obstructed by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary. Texaco and brewers Bass had teamed up to sell 48-can packs of Carling Black Label from filling stations during the tournament. The megapacks would have escaped licensing laws — which say alcohol can be sold only from licensed premises — because they would have been classed as wholesale quantities.



The Carling promotion was due to start on Monday

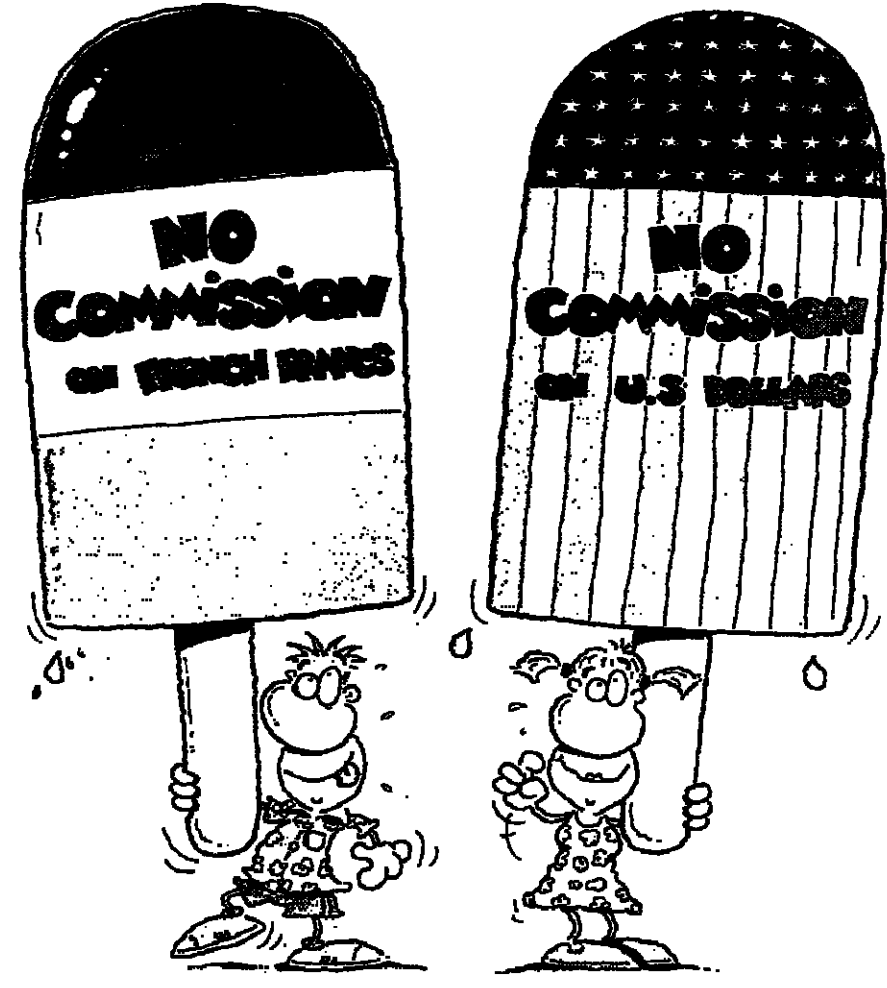
The promotion was due to start on Monday — just before Wednesday's big kick-off — but ran into Home Office disapproval.

A Home Office spokeswoman said it had not vetoed the scheme but had been concerned about "the spirit of the licensing laws".

She added: "We thought it was not a good idea." That was enough to give Texaco second thoughts. However, a spokeswoman said the scheme had been delayed, not abandoned. The chain had planned to put stacks of lager on its forecourts in an attempt to grab a share of the lucrative take-home beer market during the World Cup. But brewers Bass tried to distance themselves from the plan: "Texaco were doing it. We were just supplying the bound up boot-packs. If we are asked to supply beer we do it."

"With almost 40 per cent of British marriages collapsing, ours is the highest divorce rate in Europe. What's happening to our families? The Government is in a moral panic."
Deborah Moggach writes on marriage on the rocks

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4 BRITAIN

Defendant suggested to 999 service that murdered schoolgirl, found with broken skull, had suffered an accident, neighbour tells court

Billie Jo fell, foster father claimed

Luke Harding

A NEIGHBOUR of the murdered schoolgirl Billie Jo Jenkins yesterday described how she found the teenager lying in a pool of blood at her home.

Denise Franklin said the 13-year-old was in a "flat position" on her front with her right arm curled up towards her chin... remarkably unblemished... as if asleep.

Giving evidence on the second day of the trial of Sion Jenkins, Billie Jo's foster father, who is charged with her murder, Mrs Franklin said Jenkins had telephoned her on the afternoon of the killing, in February last year, to tell her that Billie Jo had had "an accident".

Mrs Franklin ran the 600 yards to the Jenkins' Victorian home. "Sion said to me, 'Billie is through there',"

Mrs Franklin told a jury at the crown court in Lewes, east Sussex. "He pointed to the door which leads to the

French windows and the patio. The door was shut. I ran into the dining room and saw Billie Jo's body.

"She was lying just outside the patio doors. Her body was completely flat. It wasn't at all dishevelled. Her face was remarkably clear and clean looking. I went over to her and tried to get a pulse. She was lying on a black plastic bag, which was filled with a pool of blood."

The court heard that Jenkins had called an ambulance at 3.38pm shortly before Mrs Franklin arrived. While he comforted two of his natural daughters, Annie then aged 12, and Lottie, aged 10, Mrs Franklin laid a towel by Billie Jo's head.

Asked by Richard Camden Pratt QC, prosecuting, whether Billie Jo was still breathing she said no. "I then saw what was actually wrong with her. I could see that not only was there blood in the plastic bag but there were bits of flesh... Then I looked at her head. I saw her skull was like great, big jagged bits of



Sion Jenkins... accused of killing foster daughter

Jenkins' call for ambulance

Ambulance operator: "What has happened?" Jenkins: "I really don't know. My daughter has fallen or she's got head injuries. There is blood everywhere."

Ambulance operator: "What? She's bled her head? She is bleeding from her head?"

Jenkins: "Yes. I don't know. There is blood everywhere on her head. She's lying on the floor."

Later in the conversation the ambulance operator asks if Billie Jo is still breathing. Jenkins: "I don't know. I haven't looked."

Jo had "fallen over", it was claimed. Asked what had happened to her, he replied: "I really don't know. My daughter has fallen. Or she has got head injuries." The operator asked: "Is she breathing all

right?" He replied: "I don't know. I have not looked."

The prosecution claim that Sion Jenkins bludgeoned Billie Jo to death with an 18in metal tent peg in the few minutes between returning from a clarinet lesson with two of his daughters and leaving again in his car. Eight minutes after calling the ambulance, he made a second emergency call, at 3.46pm.

Mrs Franklin then told the operator: "This is a total, total emergency." In the telephone transcripts, which were read to the court, Mrs Franklin described Billie Jo's pulse as "very very faint", adding: "She is still warm. She may have lost it by now. She is just warm-tepid."

After being shown police photographs of the dead girl, Mrs Franklin had to be escorted from the court in tears. Billie Jo's natural parents, Bill Jenkins (no relation) and mother Deborah, watched from the balcony showing signs of distress.

The jury heard that after the ambulance arrived, Mrs

Franklin took Lottie and Annie upstairs as the paramedics attended Billie Jo. "Sion kept... cuddling [the girl]. He told me Billie Jo had died. I put my arms around him."

Later, Jenkins was reunited with his wife, Lois, and their two youngest daughters, Esther and Maya. The family moved to Mrs Franklin's home after the police sealed off the house. As they left that evening to stay with other friends, Mrs Jenkins handed her husband his fleece jacket.

The court was told the jacket held spots of blood which could only have come from Billie Jo. Jenkins refused to wear it. It was claimed. "It was very, very cold but he was adamant," Mrs Franklin said.

Billie Jo who was six weeks short of her 14th birthday had lived with her foster family, the Jenkins, for nearly five years. Jenkins, who was deputy head at William Parker Boys' Comprehensive School, Hastings, denies the charge. The trial continues.



Neighbour Denise Franklin who was called to Billie Jo

News in brief

Random advisers for Lottery

THE lottery charities board is to select grant-makers on a random basis similar to jury selection. One hundred people in local authority areas in London and Yorkshire will today receive letters inviting them to consider serving on a regional advisory committee. Random selection has been adopted on the urging of Martin Wainwright, Guardian northern editor, who chairs the board's Yorkshire advisory panel. — David Brindle

Stabbing at Halifax school

A 17-year-old was arrested and is being questioned about the stabbing of a sixth-former at Holy Trinity faith-maintained school, Halifax yesterday, shortly before Education Secretary David Blunkett visited the town to monitor progress in tackling disciplinary problems and under-achievement at the nearby Ridings comprehensive. The victim, also 17, was "comfortable" in the Royal Halifax Infirmary. — Martin Wainwright

Changing climate

THE Government has launched practical studies on the effect of climate change on Britain, from the possibility of olive groves in Kent to greater food poisoning, and the destruction by salt of East Anglia's best farming land. Environment Minister Michael Meacher said the study was necessary because climate change was inevitable in Britain. — Paul Brown

Woodward doctor inquiry

GERALD Feigin, the pathologist who carried out the post mortem on Boston baby Matthew Eappen in the Louise Woodward trial, is under investigation for failing to spot a serious heart defect while examining the body of 34-year-old man, US newspapers say.

Guardian writer wins award

THE Guardian columnist George Monbiot has won the One World National Press Award to honour journalists who advance understanding of international affairs. The television newscaster Jon Snow, presenting the award, said: "He raised often difficult subjects and made them memorable."

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An ethnic Albanian makes a victory sign during peaceful demonstrations in Pristina yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: SPOJAN ILC

Yugoslav ghosts haunt Kosovo

Ian Black and Richard Norton-Taylor

NO ONE on the spot has much doubt about where things are heading in Kosovo — former Yugoslavia's latest agony. Refugees, armed gangs and Serbian attacks are all grimly familiar images.

With reports yesterday of 50 dead, 200 missing and a mass grave containing 300 bodies, memories returned of earlier Balkan bloodletting as Tony Blair vowed that Europe would not stand and watch Serbia's southern province become "another Bosnia".

As diplomats planned emergency meetings and Nato pondered military options for sealing the border between Kosovo and Albania, the Prime Minister warned the Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, that the European Union meant business — though exactly what he did not, or could not, say.

"I would send a very, very strong message indeed to Mr Milosevic and any of those parties that are engaged in violence and creating instability that we believe we have a clear interest in preventing that sort of threat and in reducing tension," Mr Blair said during a visit to Rome. "It would be a very serious mis-



Albanian Selim Hoti passes a burned-out house yesterday after Novi Poklek village was destroyed by Serbian police. PHOTOGRAPH: SANTIAGO LYON

take for people to underestimate our resolve."

Exactly what punishment Mr Milosevic faces is unclear, though British officials say the most likely is the re-imposition of a plan to ban foreign investment, briefly lifted after he agreed to start talks with the Democratic League of Kosovo before the latest crackdown began.

The Foreign Office says options include a presence by the Organisation of Security and Co-operation in Europe, or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Options are to be examined in a flurry of consultations starting with EU foreign ministers on Monday.

Britain's Defence Secretary, George Robertson, told BBC radio yesterday: "Nato is considering all options, including the most radical." But Russia could veto military action.

Kosovo — where Mr Milosevic launched his nationalist career in 1989 — has long been seen as the region's next flashpoint. Its tensions have flared fears of a wider Balkan war with the province's Albanians demanding independence from Belgrade, and intervention by Albania. In the nightmare scenario, fighting could spill over into Macedonia, even drawing in Greece and Turkey, fellow Nato members already at odds over a wide range of issues.

International concern has meant swifter action

than at earlier stages of Yugoslavia's bloody disintegration. It took four months from the start of Bosnia's fighting in 1991 to the convening of the London Conference, the first abortive attempt to contain the war.

But when Kosovo set the alarm bells ringing with the March massacre at Drenica, officials of the international contact group in Belgrade, and intervention by Albania, in the nightmare scenario, fighting could spill over into Macedonia, even drawing in Greece and Turkey, fellow Nato members already at odds over a wide range of issues.

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International concern has meant swifter action

No exit for US outlaw killers

Christopher Flood in Los Angeles

A SMALL army of police and national guard troops surrounded two armed fugitives in a stand-off in a canyon in the American West yesterday.

The village of Bluff in south-west Utah was evacuated as more than 400 armed men backed by helicopters and Swat teams closed in on the two "survivalists" after a third was found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot to the head.

Roy Romer, the governor of neighbouring Colorado state where the manhunt began, said the two men were "extremely dangerous". They are believed to have shot dead a police officer, Dale Claxton, aged 45, last Friday in the town of Cortez, Colorado, 50 miles to the east. Then they vanished into the Four Corners area, where Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona share an intersecting border. It was here that the outlaws Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid hid from agents of the Pinkerton detective agency.

The country is an arid desert of canyons, low mountains and unusual rock formations. Nearby is the Mesa Verde national park, with the Indian cliff dwellings. A tributary of the Colorado river, the San Juan, flows through the area and police launched small boats in case the men had tried to escape by water.

The fugitives were uncovered on Thursday when a second police officer was shot and injured as he checked a report that a gunman wearing camouflage gear had fired at a social worker near Bluff.

The fugitives were identified as Alan "Monte" Pilon, aged 30, and Jason Wayne McVean, aged 26. Their companion Robert Mason, aged 26, killed himself. They were all outdoor survivalists who were not known to belong to any militia, but held similar anti-government, far-right political views.

Mr McVean was convicted of breaking into cars several years ago. Mr Pilon had a drunk driving conviction and owed \$1,500 (\$220) in unpaid taxes. All three worked in the building trade and are suspected of having robbed a casino in New Mexico last year. They may have been planning another robbery when they were seen by the policeman they allegedly killed.

News in brief

Air France talks continue as pre-Cup travel chaos mounts

FRANCE'S travel chaos in the run-up to the World Cup mounted yesterday as a pilots' strike entered its fifth day and a 36-hour walkout by train conductors left only half the country's mainline services running. *Jon Henley in Paris writes.*

Talks between Air France's management and its pilots, who are resisting a plan to cut their salaries by 15 per cent in return for shares — resumed last night after breaking up in confusion before dawn.

Union leaders said they would be starting "almost from scratch".

Air France insisted the talks were advancing. Rush-hour traffic around Paris was jammed and demand for rental cars soared.

As people tried to escape the train conductors' strike, called by six different unions to push for better pay and conditions.

The state railway company, SNCF, said services in the provinces had been hard hit.

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Train crash toll climbs to 96

RESCUE workers yesterday removed the final carriage, a dining car, from beneath the rubble of a bridge at the site of Wednesday's rail disaster in the German town of Eschede, *writes Denis Staunton in Berlin.*

The death toll stands at 96 and rescuers do not expect to find any more bodies among the wreckage. But police have not ruled out the possibility that other remains are yet to be discovered nearby.

Nineteen bodies have been identified. Experts agreed that the accident was almost certainly caused by a broken wheel on one of the carriages. Rail timetables were in chaos yesterday after officials recalled 60 high-speed trains for examination.

Diva a man for life, says rabbi

THIS head of a rabbinical court in Jerusalem has ruled that Dana International, Israel's celebrated transsexual singer, could be counted in a *minyan*, the group of 10 men required for Jewish prayer services.

Whoever is born male remains so for life, the *Ma'ariv* daily quoted Rabbi Eliezer Abergel as saying.

But the sultry winner of this year's Eurovision contest would have to become religiously observant before qualifying for prayer group. Ms International, who had a sex change five years ago, has become a symbol for Israel's bitterly opposed secular majority and ultra-religious minority.

The country's orthodox establishment has denounced her as an abomination. — A.P. Jerusalem.

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No exit for US outlaw killers

Christopher Reed in Los Angeles

A SMALL army of police and national guard troops surrounded a canyon in a state of emergency yesterday. The village of Bluff, more than 400 miles from the border, was surrounded by more than 400 troops. Swat teams closed in on two "survivalists" who had been found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot to the head. Roy Roper, the governor of Colorado, the governor of the state where the men were found, said the two men were extremely dangerous.

They are believed to be shot dead by police on Friday in the town of Colorado, 50 miles from the border. The two men were found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot to the head. Roy Roper, the governor of Colorado, the governor of the state where the men were found, said the two men were extremely dangerous.

The country is an ancient land of canyons, low mountains and unusual mountains. Near the Verde national park, the Indian cliff dwellings of the San Juan, from the area and police have found the remains of a man and a woman in a cave. The remains were found in a cave. The remains were found in a cave.



Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (centre) holds court among cultural greats of the day as depicted in a work entitled Weimar 1803 by Otto Knille. Ownership of his legacy is at the centre of a bitter row

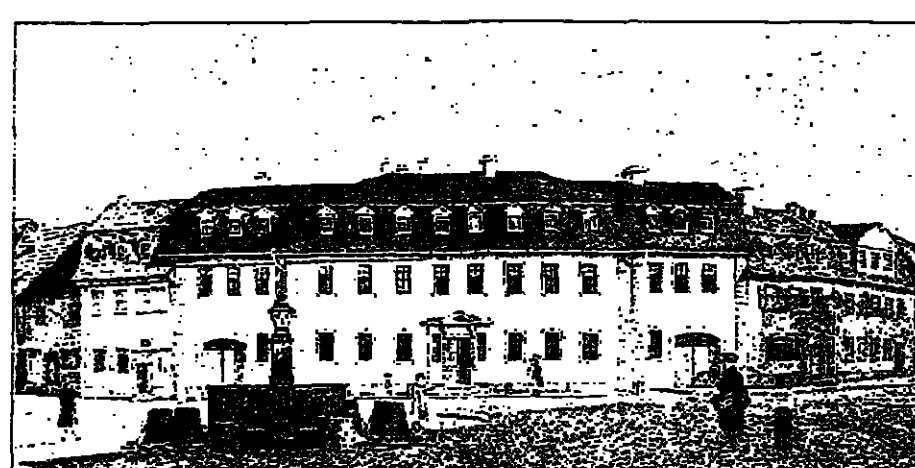
PICTURES: AFG PHOTO

Goethe fans fight for poetic justice



Goethe and Schiller take pride of place outside the national theatre in Weimar

Ian Traynor reports from Weimar, where a battle is raging between descendants of the former royal rulers, who want their books back, and the guardians of the most important archive housing the work of one of Germany's greatest writers



The house in Weimar where the writer lived from 1782 until his death in 1832

A SMALL town with a big past, Weimar is rich in German history and culture. Monuments to the cradle of German democracy compete with the barbarism of the Buchenwald concentration camp. From Bach to Bauhaus, from Herder to Hitler, the poetry, philosophy, music and politics of two centuries vie for attention at every corner.

But there is no greater name in Weimar than Johann Wolfgang von Goethe — national poet, novelist, dramatist, scientist, critic and art theorist — who lived, died and is buried here.

And behind the splendid walls of the palaces, libraries and stuccoed halls, a row is

raging, discreetly but bitterly, over the great man's legacy. At the centre of the dispute is a 12-year-old girl, Princess Leonie of the grand duchy of Saxe-Weimar and Eisenach, the royal dynasty which ruled Weimar until the revolution that followed the first world war in 1918, is the heiress to the family fortune. And she wants her books back.

The trouble is that the coveted books constitute the most important collection in the German literary repository: the Goethe and Schiller Archive. The works are housed here in a neo-classical 19th-century library and research centre under the stewardship of a public foundation, the Weimar Classics.

Following German reunification in 1990, a 1994 law on restitution of movable goods expropriated by the old East German regime triggered hundreds of lost-property claims from the scores of dukes, princes, barons and counts who are a fixture of the gossip columns and society blather in republican Germany.

And in a ruling last month that has Weimar scholars fretting for the fate of the national treasures, the local office dealing with restitution affairs validated the princess's claim to the Goethe and Schiller Archive.

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UNITED KINGDOM

Scotland tilts to the SNP

Labour are the unionists

IT'S NOW only 11 months before Scotland elects, proportionally, the first Edinburgh parliament to sit since the 18th century. It may be Labour's greatest and most popular rent in the fabric of the Old Constitution but, in Scotland at least, there's no gratitude. Since last September Labour in Scotland has let itself go; it has got flabby. This weekend it is reduced to silent cheering for William Hague — in Glasgow for the Scottish Tory conference. A Tory revival would surely support from the Scottish Nationalists. As for them, Scottish voters have been telling pollsters that a majority favours independence.

But that remote and difficult prospect is not much of a rallying cry for '99. The SNP meanwhile has to contend with its new rainbow hue. Not for nothing is the satirical background blue — there is a limit to how far Alex Salmond's collectivism is compatible with his support among ex-Tories. Besides, when it comes to assembly votes, Scottish people are going to want fiscal

honesty. So who is going to pay to send lads and lassies o'pairs to university without tuition fees? Are the English really going to maintain what is *per capita* the United Kingdom's most generous public health provision without demur? Now that Scotland can tax herself... The country that gave the world Adam Smith and Davey Balfour's Uncle Ebenezer of the Shaws was notably less enthusiastic in its endorsement of tax-raising powers last September. Sometime soon, in other words, the SNP has to come clean on policy and cost.

Voters might buy some blame-the-Treasury rhetoric but SNP monetary and fiscal stances will need to be laid out, and if there is money left from that nationalist golden oldie of the hydrocarbon levy, Greenpeace will surely not let them forget there are neighbours round the North Sea anxious to see it spent on cleaning up pollution they blame on the United Kingdom. Let alone cleaning up Dounreay.

Tony Blair may have found his words of only a couple of days ago unimpeachable but Labour did score a public relations coup in timing its announcement of the end of "new" reprocessing at Dounreay to coincide with the opening of the Nats' conference. That decision, a generation overdue, still does not mean British governments

have fully declared the costs of the nuclear programme. Honest public accounts would record just how negative are those assets of the Atomic Energy Authority buried in barrels beneath Calveithness. Would-be Scottish governments will have to tend and protect this site for a century.

The handling of Dounreay may be a sign that the admirable Donald has got his eye back on the ball. Yet this pillar of rectitude presides over a party on the run. Recently it has looked deeply vulnerable to charges of municipal sleaze. Who looks forward to seeing the councillors who rule in North Lanarkshire and elsewhere in west central Scotland turning up on the floor of the assembly? Donald Dewar's task is nothing less than the reformation of Labour in Scotland, and it's urgent. He has to fit his party for power-sharing and work out how compatible will be power-holding in Edinburgh and in the localities of urban Scotland. He will have to leave Westminster sharpish, opening his job as Scottish Secretary to a fresher face, perhaps Helen Liddell. To his successor falls the task of convincing Scotland of the value of the UK envelope, that Blairite remedies for failing schools, the long-term unemployed are not country-specific. If they are, Labour is finished as a United Kingdom political

party. In Scotland it can never really hope to out-tartan the Nats; that means its fate in Scotland is to be the new unionist party.

The fit and the fat

Saving the US constitution

When the great Thomas Jefferson committed the infant United States to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" in the Declaration of Independence he must have known his hedonistic injunction would set his fellow-countrymen (women and slaves did not count for much in 1776) on a collision course with their older, puritanical instincts. As yesterday's medical *fazzah* against American obesity showed, the collision keeps coming round. Jefferson was a child of rationality and the 18th-century Enlightenment. But the republic he helped create was rooted, not just in warm Virginia, but in wintry Massachusetts to the north, founded in the pursuit of a 17th-century notion of goodness. It has left the US a profoundly Protestant country, one where even the Jews, Catholics and atheists are Protestant Jews, Catholics and atheists, individualistic, but bent on salvation, on earth or later. The tension thus

created has punctuated American life ever since. When they are not busy trying to outlaw sex, tobacco (Virginia!) or alcohol, Americans enthusiastically pursue them like no other people on earth.

The cycle is now in one of its neo-prohibitionist phases, with smoking under pressure even when committed in private in California. The war against booze has never ended. "Sin" being an unfashionable concept, "health" is the puritans' weapon. You cannot pursue life, liberty etc if you are dead.

But Americans also have a passion for quantification, from the biggest buildings to the fat content of yoghurt. So it was big news this week when a new classification of human obesity, the Body Mass Index, pronounced 29 million unsuspecting Americans fat and 39 million obese. Better still, it has a DIY formula to judge ourselves.

Many Americans will rush to do that. But they will be the fanatically healthy ones. It is part of the Jeffersonian legacy that the US contains the world's fittest as well as the fattest. It is no secret why so many Americans are obese: they eat junk food and do no exercise. Faced with bad news from the BMI they will simply resort to slimming pills and continue to pursue happiness in their own sedentary way.

Letters to the Editor

A classical Freudian slip

IT is becoming an urban myth that the Timeside Metro plays soothing music to reduce vandalism (Letters June 5). The music may soothe some, but is intended to aggravate the youths sufficiently to move on — what criminologists call displacement. Who is researching what the aggravated youths are doing once driven from the station? Can we expect the proponents of crime prevention "techno-fixes" to ensure that all stolen car radios lock on to Radio 3?

Dr Nic Groombridge,
 St Mary's University, London.

FOR Polly Toynbee to compare the (former) child-kidnappers to those of the Nazis and communists is an affront (Children of despair, June 3). Anyone who has spent time on a kibbutz (I lived on one for eight years) would not find evidence of a child-rearing system that was "inhumane, usually brutal and punitive". Colin Miller, Chester.

NEW Year 1999 bank holiday gives Britons a "four-day drinking break" (Report, June 4). As a residential social worker, I'd like to point out that we can't all work office hours. In fact, if my manager is reading this, I'd like to volunteer for the December 31 1998 sleep-in, if only to avoid the horde of monomaniacal drinkers intent on celebrating a rather dull calendar coincidence. David Curi, London.

SINCE Barry Norman's programme for the BBC uses only two digits to express the date, should we presume it was forced to stop by the millennium bug? Chris Hind, London.

WHAT with Lucian in *Pass Notes* and Matthew in *Inside Story* (G2, June 3), perhaps you should be renamed The Freudian. Stephen Boyd, Glasgow.

Abuse that never ends

NICK Davies is to be congratulated on his excellent article about child abuse (Letters June 5). The most serious crime, June 2-5. However, what is not sufficiently conveyed is the appalling suffering that has been inflicted upon children in so-called "care". The suffering never let them as they received no help at the time and it has been reawakened by the investigations.

At least their testimony is now being believed by the police and juries. But the cross-examinations in court are deeply hurtful. And once the trials are over they are abandoned because the authorities no longer have any use for them. They are left feeling used once again by people with power.

The local authorities, children's charities and churches minimise their responsibility when they have the power, but not the will, to improve their lives. The victims want and need from the heads of these organisations a public acknowledgement of the harm that was done and a sincere and unreserved apology. Pete Harnsworth, Liverpool.

NICK Davies should receive awards. I suspect his back will receive a number of wounds. Having spent 18 years researching child abuse, I can only state his figures are underestimates. In this most covert of perverse human behaviour, corruption and conspiracy has to be the rule.

Clare Short may flinch, but we won't turn away

WE ARE outraged by Clare Short's remarks on the Sudan Crisis Appeal (Short attacks 'unethical' charity appeal for Sudan, June 4). Sufficient money has not been available from governments to finance the aid operation that is required in southern Sudan.

The Disaster Emergency Committee — an alliance of 12 leading British aid agencies working in the region — launched this appeal because people were dying and many more will die unless they react. The DERC has made clear at all times that this crisis is the result of 15 years of war combined with two years of drought. Humanitarian aid will make a difference, but only peace can provide a long-term solution. As aid agencies, our role is to bring help to those who need it. We cannot

Child protection does not work — research on the North American system, which is 10 years more advanced than our own, proves this. There must be a new system with a developing bedrock of substantiated scientific fact, with new personnel.

Dr Jim Phillips,
 Founder, Justus Trust,
 Stourbridge, W Midlands.

DO not know if my late friend Peter Morrison was homosexual or not, but it is absolutely disgraceful when he can no longer defend himself, to drag up his name into an article on paedophilia where the story concerning him is at the most a story about his visiting public lavatories for homosexual purposes.

Lord Waddington,
 House of Lords.

YOUR article on the failure of the Church of England to respond adequately to allegations of child abuse is correct in claiming there are startling examples of episcopal failure to act. Some bishops have a poor grasp of the issues and others prefer to deal with such matters behind closed doors and to exclude statutory agencies. But the Church has made major strides in child protection. The House of Bishops established a clear policy lead in its 1995 report. All dioceses have special advisers. Suspensions are routinely reported, effective collaboration takes place with police and social services and child

protection strategies are formulated and reviewed. Elizabeth Valentine, Child protection adviser to the bishops of London, Oxford and Stapey.

YOUR exposure of malpractice and cover-up in Sunderland demonstrates how important it is that whistleblowers are protected. I have worked closely with Public Concern at Work and Richard Shepherd MP on his Public Interest Disclosure Bill. This is expected to become law within the month and will, for the first time, give whistleblowers real protection.

The law would have provided the whistleblower in this case, Colin Smart, with full protection against victimisation when he challenged the abuse internally, and when he went to the police and to the Social Services Inspectorate. Reasonable media disclosures, such as this story, are also protected. The law would also have stopped the wide gagging clause used to keep the public in the dark.

By protecting public interest whistleblowers, the new law will protect the safety and well-being of children in care and the public. With the Government's proposed Freedom of Information Act, this bill will mark a welcome and irreversible shift away from the presumption of secrecy and sloth toward a culture of openness and accountability. Rose Cranston MP, Dudley North.

stand back and allow people to starve. People without food cannot wait for peace. The public once again shown its support and solidarity for those in need by donating \$4.5 million in just two weeks. Hardly a case of "flinching and turning away" as Short suggests.

Jamie McCall,
 Secretary, Disasters Emergency Committee, London.



For England, Gazza and St Hod

IN THE light of Duncan Mackay's letter (June 3) and Mark Steel's article (But is it art? June 3), I think it is worth pointing out that Shakespeare did, in fact, drop Falstaff from his squad for France — no doubt disappointing that section of the audience chanting his name.

England went on to perform rather well without him, the implication being that Prince Hal had to leave behind his

booze and kebab-fuelled days in order to achieve glory. Falstaff's absence haunts Henry V just as Gazza's is likely to haunt England's World Cup performances. But at least this way bold Sir Paul gets to play a role in all the matches — excluding the final, which of course he would have won single-handedly if only he'd been there. Adrian Blamires, Reading.

Schools a class apart

SARAH Malins is right to praise the issue of the social and academic imbalance within the state education system (Letters, June 4). All research shows that schools with a balanced intake are able to use that fact to raise the standards for everyone.

Unfortunately, the educational policies of the last 19 years have ensured that in urban areas there will be schools which are able to choose their pupils, while the rest will have intakes which are socially and academically disadvantaged. Middle-class parents who cannot gain access to the "good" schools will take their children elsewhere. A few idealists will stay loyal to the local school, but may well find that their children are becoming isolated and unhappy.

The situation is difficult to remedy, especially in a class-ridden society like ours in which the ruling groups con-

fer an inferior status on state schools by not using them. It would be nice to think that Labour, traditional champions of the poor and oppressed, might at least have the outlines of a strategy, instead of coining the dishonest slogan "standards, not structures". But there is hope in the form of David Blunkett's determination to close "failing" schools. Since all these will be in the inner-cities, with below average ability and above average social problems, their pupils will have to be dispersed into "better" schools. Eventually this process will ensure that all the state schools have a reasonably balanced intake. Nice one, David. Michael Pyke, Lichfield, Staffs.

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters. The Country Diary is on page 10.

Monsanto: we aim to plant seeds of real GM debate

YOU may be surprised to learn that Monsanto welcomes the Guardian ICM poll (June 4) showing that the great majority of consumers want more information and assurances on genetically modified (GM) food.

We plan to be responsive to European regulatory authorities and food retailers in their efforts to provide consumers with informative labelling and supporting materials about these foods.

As such, this coming weekend, Monsanto is launching a substantial information campaign to present the scientific facts and benefits of biotechnology. We believe consumers can only make intelligent, informed decisions about biotechnology when they understand all sides of the story.

Indeed so eager are we to help this discussion that our programme will include ways of contacting those who take an opposite position. Genuine consumer choice is what this discussion should provide. Incidentally, Monsanto will spend approximately \$1 million on the information programme, not £10 million as reported in the Guardian. And Monsanto contacted the Guardian three times in the last week to discuss the need for more information about biotechnology in the UK, but with no response. Yet you reported yesterday that Monsanto refused to comment on the results of the ICM poll. As stated above, the thrust of our new programme encourages concerned consumers to contact us and others with views on biotechnology.

The separate article by George Monbiot (The African gene, June 4) is simply not acceptable. Monbiot's commentary speculates that Monsanto is becoming the "hungry merchant of the third millennium". Nothing could be further from the truth. Many respected organisations around the world have all agreed that biotechnology presents an effective means to help feed burgeoning populations. And Monsanto is looking for ways to help their

efforts with our technologies. For example, Monsanto has co-operated with scientists from the Kenya Agriculture Research Institute (KARI) to develop sweet potatoes which are resistant to a disease that destroys up to 50 per cent of this important staple crop each year. Monsanto has completely transferred the germplasm of this important new product to KARI, with no commercial interest to Monsanto.

Unfortunately, the way in which your newspaper is reporting the issue of genetically modified foods suggests that you are not interested in a serious discussion, but in invoking fear in the food chain without scientific evidence to support these claims. Perhaps you should take a lead from the people you polled and spend more time facilitating discussion and providing balanced information to your readers, rather than simply taking one side. Ann Foster, Monsanto UK, London.

Balls of ire

WHILST applauding the Government for introducing a minimum wage, I deplore a lack of courage in not setting a maximum (Camelot boss hit jackpot, June 3). It would take me 35 years of 40-hour weeks at £3.60 an hour to earn what Camelot's Tim Holey gets in one. New deal? Maybe. Fair deal? No. Susan Scott-Hunter, Kettering, Northants.

A CAMELOT director would lose money walking from the Rolls to the office should he pause to pick up a £50 note. Ray Lees, Newark-on-Trent, Notts.

SURELY the company should rename itself Scamlot. Ofset seems supine. I suggest a regulatory body to regulate UK regulatory bodies. What about OFUK. Stephen Brooks, London.

We must treat Milosevic as the problem, not the solution. The demon king of the Balkans is at work again

The final evil

Martin Woolcott



THE most terrible process of all in the lands that used to be called Yugoslavia is not the war-making that takes lives and destroys villages and towns, but the irrevocable damage done to the future of the majority who survive.

The killing may stop, as it has done in Croatia and Bosnia, but societies undermined by distrust, deformed by a literally hateful politics, saturated with a murderous past, and burdened with criminalised economies, do not easily recover.

The most serious casualty

of the Yugoslav wars, in this respect, is Serbia itself, even though Serbs have suffered less than other south Slav peoples in terms of actual casualties and displacement of population. Now, in Kosovo, a final folly is under way which, if not soon checked, will, at a stroke, further advance the destruction of the Serbian people's prospects, while inflicting on the Albanians of that region the most futile of wars. It is as if Slobodan Milosevic, the leader with whom the Serbs are cursed, is saying to the Kosovo Albanians that they too must sip from the same poisoned cup from which every other people of former Yugoslavia has been forced to drink.

This is a truly evil act, and it is more evil than what has gone before. At least there was once a war aim, that of Greater Serbia, which constituted a reason for Serbia's actions, although not a justification for the means it employed. In the summer of 1998, there is nothing left of that. There is no Greater Serbia, and never will be, unless the

pathetic rump which is the Bosnian Serb Republic is counted as a success. Even in the distorted atmosphere of Belgrade, where many in the opposition share the prejudices of the governing circles, it is understood that Kosovo is a lost cause.

To maintain Serb rule there for any length of time over a wholly alienated population is not a serious possibility. To force that population out of the province is equally not a serious possibility. A partition of the land between Serbs and Albanians is a fantasy which still dances in the minds of some Serbians, but the chances are also remote.

Quite apart from any other consideration, the ordinary Serb is not ready to go to war in Kosovo. Many of the recruits dispatched to the region desert, are shedding their uniforms a few hundred yards from the gates of their bases, and sometimes asking the local people to help them to get back to Serbia. It is true that there are the armed local Serbs, who have their own bitter stake in Kosovo, and the professional security

forces and paramilitary groups brought in by Milosevic. With these alone, however, Milosevic can only make war. He cannot win a war.

One of the great mistakes of the mediators and diplomats in former Yugoslavia is to assume a rationality in Milosevic's actions which those actions rarely possess. Thus, the operations along the Albanian border this week, which sent refugees spinning in every direction, have a superficial rationality. In that clearing a free fire zone to separate rebels from their sanctuary and supplies is a standard preliminary to a counter-insurgency campaign.

But since Milosevic cannot win such a campaign, or if he did, could not hold down Kosovo, this tactical rationality is a strategic nonsense. It is the purpose just to gain the upper hand militarily for a while, so as to strengthen his hand in the negotiations with the Kosovo Albanians? Not so, since it is generally agreed that the Kosovo leader, Ibrahim Rugova, is ready to agree a solution short of independence,

and could persuade his people, at this juncture, to accept it. The moment is critical, because it will not need many more attacks by the police and paramilitaries to change the public mood and make a continued association with Serbia, or rump Yugoslavia, much harder to sell. If a negotiated solution is truly his aim, it would be better to go for it now, without military preliminaries. The result of the military operations of the last few days, in any case, has been the suspension of the talks brokered by the American envoy Richard Holbrooke last month.

So why is Milosevic fighting in Kosovo? The answer is that out of the savage opera of violence, of threat and counter threat, the Serbian leader draws power and energy. From the beginning Milosevic specialised in bringing into being threats to Serbia's existence. What was only latent and unformed, Milosevic made inevitable. Serbia was not ringed by enemies, but it came to be so ringed when

Milosevic had finished. He creates his own self-justifying tragedy of encirclement and isolation. Without him, there would be Serbs in the Krajina, in eastern Croatia, and in western Bosnia today. It seems possible that what the failed architect of Greater Serbia is doing now is to deliberately stoke the flames of Greater Albanianism.

Already men in the Kosovo Liberation Army speak of liberating not only Kosovo, but the Albanian parts of Macedonia and Montenegro. Already young Albanians in Macedonia, according to a recent report, "worship the KLA". Already the Albanian government has had to change the way in which it speaks of the Kosovo situation, shifting perceptibly toward a more nationalist stance.

There is certainly some foolishness on the Kosovo Albanian side, where a familiar mixture of the desire for revenge, the impact of rhetoric, and the bravado of young men is playing into Milosevic's hands. Thimor Loza, the author of an enlightening recent article on the Kosovo

saturday

The patie dilemma

Mark Lawson



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Weekend birthdays

Philip O'Connor



BALLYMENA, Ulster's most loyal town, where necks are regulation red, has never been a comfortable place for Catholics, and even as a child, the actor Liam Neeson, 46 tomorrow, was "aware of being under suspicion, of being of an inferior breed". These days, of course, he's Ballymena's second favourite son, after the other "big man", Ian Paisley.

Neeson's career has been a procession of big men. From his first stage break as union leader Jim Larkin (while he was still working as a fork-lift truck driver), to playing Jesus in a bizarre Belfast epic backed by Billy Graham, to a heavyweight boxer in David Leland's gritty Glasgow drama, *The Big Man*. Then there were two Oscars — Schindler and Wilde, both big men with bigger personalities. The other big thing about Neeson is his reputation as a Lethario — albeit one with the enviable knack of turning lovers into friends. All changed, of course, since he was snared by Natasha Richardson four years ago. They now have two children and divide their time between New England and Ireland. His former paramours — Helen Mirren, Julia Roberts, Brooke Shields and Barbara Streisand — still talk longingly of him. A bit of an enigma, really, is Neeson. A bookish schoolboy boxing champion, who can be described in the same sentence as "laidback" and "driven". "My father used to get picked up by the police for driving slowly," he once said, "and the pace of life I'm happiest with is somewhere between dead slow and stop." That'll be the Ballymena in him.

Today's birthdays: Monty Alexander, jazz pianist, 54; Sara Banerji, writer, 66; Prof Breibis Bleaney, physicist, 83; David Blunkett, MP, Secretary of State for Education, 51; Bjorn Borg, tennis player, 42; Lord Carrington, statesman, 78; David Chipp, former editor-in-chief, Press Association, 71; Dame Ninette de Valois, founder, Royal Ballet, 100; Chris de Souza, broadcaster and composer, 56; Paul Esswood, counter-tenor, 56; Helen Forrester, novelist, 79; Mike Gatting, cricketer, 40; Al Grey, jazz trombonist, 73; Iain Hamilton, composer, 76; Prof Robert Humphreys, Latin American historian, 91; Asif Iqbal, cricketer, 55; Tim Llewellyn, broadcaster, 58; Willie John McBride, rugby player, 58; Marion Mould, show jumper, 51; Sir Bryan Nicholson, armchair, 84; 66; Jamie Palmer, night-club proprietor, 34; Dr Ruth Sanger, haematologist, 80; Robert Tyrrell, chief executive, Henley Centre for Forecasting, 47; Billie Whitelaw, actress, 66.

Tomorrow's other birthdays: Ann Beach, actress and singer, 60; Sir Wilfred Cockcroft, mathematician, 75; Tal Farlow, jazz guitarist, 77; Martyn Goff, administrator, Booker Prize, 75; James Ivory, film director, 70; Tom Jones, pop singer, 58; Jaime Laredo, violinist, 57; Virginia McKenna, actress, 67; Michael Pennington, actor and writer, 55; Ronald Pickup, actor, 58; Prince, rock singer, 40; Neal Radford, cricketer, 41; Curtis Robb, athlete, 26; Jim Rose, publisher, 82; Prof Sir William Stewart, former chief scientific adviser, Cabinet Office, 68; Air Chief Marshal Sir John Thomson, C-in-C, UK Air Forces, 56.

Genius and the bottle



O'Connor... "What is his role in the lives of others?" asked Stephen Spender. "It is, I think, part angel, part demon"

PHILIP O'CONNOR, a flamboyant and self-absorbed British eccentric who turned a frank account of his abject childhood and mispent youth, *Memoirs of a Public Baby*, into a rocking literary sensation in 1989, has died at his home in southern France, aged 81. He dabbled in painting and poetry, engaged with communism, succumbed to a succession of adoring women and supported himself largely by sponging off friends and various of his six wives. He wrote incessantly, mainly about himself. O'Connor was born to Irish parents in Leighton Buzzard. His father, who threatened to "drown in a bucket any male child of his issue", never appeared; his mother, "abandoned" him to the care of Madame Tilioux in Paris for two years and later housed him out to a well-to-do guardian. Philip remained besotted with her. In *Memoirs*, he acknowledges that her absence left him yearning for the return of "her hands like living leaves on him", the embryo of an ideal of delicacy "impossible to find" and which resulted in him making impossible demands on others.

O'Connor felt that the observation of Madame Tilioux's public persona and her sense of materialism made him ambitious, inducing in him an unorthodox and rather tragic impulse to "have my soul in my actions, my brain in my body". This, in some ways, describes O'Connor's writing at its best, when it makes uncanny leaps of imagination from the internal space to the external.

Something as pedestrian as a bus journey down Tottenham Court Road allows him to explore "Englishness", comparing the bus to "a little house with its exclusive, self-enclosed staircase behind it in a meaningfully private English curve — a curve to be quite a theme of English privacy, seen in mouths and all over the place".

Back in England at 18, O'Connor was diagnosed as schizophrenic and spent time at the Maudsley Hospital. The hospital encouraged patients to explore their neuroses by painting and writing, and it was here that Geoffrey Grigson, then editor of the leading poetry magazine *New Verse*, discovered O'Connor and launched his literary career by introducing him to the London literary avant-garde.

THE mass observationalist and poet Charles Madge, and his wife, the poet Kathleen Raine, briefly had him to live with and O'Connor's work appeared alongside that of Dylan Thomas, George Barker and David Gascoyne in poetry anthologies and literary magazines. Gascoyne described O'Connor's surrealist poetry as "exciting and amusing". His surrealist poems, such as *Poems 1-11* and *Blue Jazz in Liquid Silk*, are impulsive, veering towards the imaginatively chaotic side of surrealism.

1700 a.d. in the street they flung foam about and a young funny gentleman poured the juices of a ton of blood oranges down upon the people.

At times the surrealist work tends to be self-indulgent. O'Connor himself wished to write "as a communist in the Mayakovsky manner" and produce more social-realist, albeit anarchic, writing, but

he felt that his writing persisted in its "decadent manner" beyond his control. This control was to come, after he had disappeared from literary circles, with the publication of *Memoirs of a Public Baby* in 1988. Its tone of honesty, imaginative energy, and the intensity of his literary gaze upon the minutiae of a bohemian life, captivated readers. He wrote critically of his early poetry in *Memoirs*: "To me, my poems are the mess of my having collided with my head against the brick wall of society's guardians, a shock-spill of sensations and thoughts in surrealistic disarray, contemporarily suitable".

O'Connor, who spent too much time as a drunk, went on to write *Britain in the Sixties: Vagrancy Ethos and Actuality* (1963), a documentary-style book in which he interviewed tramps and other street people. His most conventional work was *Living in Crosses* (1962), written in a style not dissimilar to a Shell travel guide. Moving to France in 1967, he saw himself very much in exile; that Jonathan Cape published his *Selected Poems* (1966-1968) delighted him and he continued to write daily either poems or a journal. His third wife and patron, the American Panna Grady, led him out from drunkenness and his collection of poems entitled *Think-*

ing of Li Po (1965), which I published, was dedicated to her as "the Muse who amuses". They reflected a much gentler side of his musings on classical musicians.

The poems I haven't written I owe to music, which swept the rubbish of broken leaves about broken lines. And lies about hopes aborted. The poems I don't write I've heard properly rendered tonight.

And I loved Philip O'Connor. He proposed to me last summer and asked me to call my child after him. He was a prolific lover but not responsible. His nine children were blessed and frustrated in him as a father. In the less fractious recent years, he was able to take particular succour from his youngest son Felix, who became a philosophical sparring partner.

BUT when Philip cursed you, at times he could hurt unintentionally. Thus he unwittingly alienated Peter Elson, of Tube Press, who published some of his journals, *Agockide* (1986) and *Life after Death* (1996), and John Berger, whose intended review of these journals for the Guardian annoyed Philip, and so never appeared in print.

Philip was both saint and sinner and he sought out these sides in others. Stephen Spender wrote in his laudatory introduction to *Memoirs of a Public Baby* that O'Connor "is in sympathy with what is the truth, or the demonic, in you, completely intolerant of everything else". Spender felt that the "peculiarity of Philip O'Connor is that, on the crowded path he walks and portrays... he is absolutely the genuine article". Spender concluded by asking "What is his role in the lives of others, and in the life he describes? It is, I think, part angel, part demon".

It was Spender's domination that secured for Philip a little but important income from the Royal Literary Fund and the Society of Authors. In his turn, O'Connor was deeply moved by Spender's "private" poetry. Others, such as Keith Botford and Saul Bellow, continued to respect his rough genius, published him and organised for Boston University to acquire his manuscripts.

It was thanks to Panna that Philip was able to dedicate himself to knowledge and self-knowledge. He related Christianity to Marxism, professed to be a Taoist, and to holding literary affinities with Rousseau, Gorky and Tolstoy. In recent years, he became very keen on E.M. Forster. In 1991 he stated his philosophical po-

sition: "I don't believe in God enough to oppose him. That's superstition... I am a communist, in fact I was a Stalinist. I would call myself a post-communist Taoist anarchist". But last year, when I spoke to him, he no longer opposed religion; he felt neither an atheist nor religious.

SPENDER said of his poetry that the "criticism one might make is that, since he is incapable of being anything but himself for a single moment, and is, as far as conceivably possible, completely original, he cannot discover anything so objective as an artistic form" and concluded that "more than most preachers, he offers body and spirit a blessed new chance".

Philip continued writing to the end, propositioning me last month with a new book, saying with exclamation and humour there was no hurry; "my two legs are nearly useless and I wish I were a centipede" adding that "the energy resisting death keeps one alive." A friend put it well: "Now that Philip is in the great vineyard in the sky, the angels can hang from his lips".

Patricia Scanlon

Philip O'Connor, writer, born September 8, 1916; died May 29, 1998

Face to Faith

Trading places

Jonathan Romain

THE Christian churches may have been suffering a crisis in membership in recent decades, but faith generally is far from being in decline. Instead, there is a religious undercurrent flowing through society in which thousands of people are converting from Christianity to other faiths.

A large percentage of the proselytes come from Anglican backgrounds — hence the statistics showing a decline in the numbers attending church on Sunday. They are adopting faiths that do not produce annual returns. This means that losses in many churches are offset to some extent by corresponding gains in other places of worship. This has not been recognised, and gives a distorted picture of religious disaffiliation.

Among the main faiths to have gained members are Buddhism, Islam and Judaism. Each has distinctive strengths which have attracted outsiders. Buddhism offers a path to self-knowledge and inner calm in an era of confusion and hype; Islam offers a sense of discipline and direction in a world that so often seems chaotic and pointless; Judaism offers communal camaraderie and personal identity at a time when family values and localities are under siege.

Christianity also has its special qualities — excellent at spirituality and personal salvation — and still gains newcomers despite its overall shrinkage. It is also true that each of the faiths contains many of the elements pertaining to the others, at a level perhaps less appreciated by the public at large. The result, though, is a large swing away from the Church of England towards other religions.

One reason is no doubt the often-heard criticism of its "loss of nerve", which is unfavourably contrasted with the supposedly more consistent features of other faiths. However, this is only a partial factor for there are also external causes beyond the Church's control.

The first is the enormous mix of religions we now have. Until 1945, Britain could be characterised as a Christian country, with a very small number of Jews and a handful of others living here too. Today it is a multi-faith society, including Bahais, Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, Muslims, Rastafarians and Sikhs. Moreover, whereas in the past the general ethos was for non-Christians to "keep their heads down" and avoid attracting too much attention to themselves, now there are no such constraints. The growth in the number of members of other faiths is matched by the high profile that they have, whether it be the sight of Sikh turbans or towering minarets or halal shops or TV rabbis.

The result is that people with a nominal attachment to the Church are now presented

with religious options that were once either unknown or inaccessible. No longer does one have to travel to Japan to learn about Buddhism or scour obscure bookshops for material on Islam. One can see and experience such religions in many a high street, and, if sufficiently moved, can convert without uprooting oneself or being ostracised.

The second development is that religion has become a matter of personal choice. People do not automatically follow the faith of their family. It may be the first religious point, but if it is found wanting, then many will not hesitate to look elsewhere. Inherited religion is a fast-declining concept and is being replaced by the same market forces that affect all other walks of life. It has to face the questions: does it serve me well? Is it the best I can get?

Moreover, religion is being privatised and becoming an individual domain irrespective of the wider context in which the person operates. The old adage the "family that prays together stays together" was based on the assumption that husband, wife and children all shared the same faith, and that any deviance would endanger the family unit. Today, religion has been relegated to the status of a personal hobby; family members will pursue their

Religion today has the status of a personal hobby

own interests — be it going shopping, attending church or playing football — and simply meet up for lunch afterwards.

The third development is the sharp decrease in religious knowledge and experience within many households, so that many people are brought up without any religion at all. Yet they still have religious needs and seek spiritual answers to fill the vacuum they feel in their lives. While some will turn to the Church, others are attracted to the non-Christian faiths which they feel offer a message or way of life that appeals to them more.

It is noteworthy that some of those faiths, such as Judaism, are not missionary. It believes that there are many paths to God and that it matters not which one you take. What counts is not whether you call God Christ or Allah or Adonai or Buddha, but whether you lead a life of integrity and ethics. While some religious leaders may be unhappy at those who are leaving their faith to convert to another, what is important is that people find a religious home somewhere.

Dr Jonathan Romain is rabbi of Maidenhead Synagogue and author of *The Jews of England* and *Will Faith Us Do Part?*, a study of mixed-faith couples

online

Royal Worcester is told to serve everyone equally

A Country Diary

NORTH PEMBROKESHIRE: At 11 o'clock on a Sunday morning, there's always a service in Newen church. The bell rings. One Sunday with the shock, vibration and noise, a baby owl fell out of its nest in the tower. A quick-witted member of the congregation picked it up, climbed up inside the tower and returned it to its nest. The young sparrows at the old post office, Brynberian, were not so lucky. Their parents nested in the swift boxes. When the swifts screamed back, trouble was inevitable. The first sign was the body of a baby sparrow smashed on the stone below the nests. Soon the swifts were back in residence to fulfil their one landlocked duty of the year — another generation.

Perhaps giving boxes the name of birds is a mistake. In the garden, I have an old inaccessible tit-box. Each February, tits start investigating. They tap, pop in and out and vanish before finally building a nest. But this year they were interrupted. A pair of nuthatches checked over the box with a fierce and ringing inspection. Their calls intensified. Now it is a nuthatch box. Thanks to a steady supply of peanuts, they raised one family and decided on a second. The first brood has gone and once again

they're dashing in and out of the box. When they arrive at the birdtable, the others scatter. Their support bullet-like bodies whilst the thick neck carries a lethal beak.

Other young birds hang around longer. Young sparrows and greenfinches line up in bushes and trees twittering pitifully. Parents dash around with crammed beaks trying to satisfy insatiable appetites.

AUDREY INSCHE

Death Notices

CHESHOLM, Bedfordshire, Major, Major and daughter, Dame (D) Katherine Chesholm on 24 July, 1988. Memorial service at 11.30 on Friday 19 June 1998 at The Friends Meeting House at Mount Street in central Manchester, later a celebration and burial. Chesholm, at 2.30pm on 11 September 1988. Donations to The Spinal Injuries Association, c/o The Friends Meeting House, 4 Stone Lane, Presbury (MK22) 22222.

Engagements

FEATHERS/SIMPSON, Robert Simpson and Gaynor Simpson of Boston, Lincolnshire, are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Helen, to Adam, son of Mrs M. R. Feather, of Wymondley, London.

To place your announcement telephone 0171 715 4100 or fax 0171 715 4120 between 9am and 5pm Mon-Fri.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

IN A PANEL on our front page yesterday, we listed the names of eight high profile BBC people who were at work during the strike by the broadcast casting union Bectu. The action was confined to Bectu members and there was no reason why any of those mentioned should not have been at work. We would like to apologise for any embarrassment that may have been caused.

IN AN article about the meet-

ing of football and art in Scotland, headed, *The referee's a dancer*, pages 6 and 7, G2, June 4, we created an unlikely year of the rock artist, Peter Gabriel. On February 2 we said he was 49. On May 13 we said he was 48. We were (nearly) right the first time. He was 48 on February 2.

SOME copies of the Guardian yesterday, June 5, carried the wrong date in the masthead, telling readers it was May 23, again.

Happiness is a cigar called Hamlet. The mild cigar.

45p
Friday
June 5
1998
Published in London and Manchester.

SMOKING CAUSES FATAL DISEASES
Chief Medical Officers' Warning

صكنا من الامم

Every Thursday in the
The Guardian

ing es

with religious options that were once either unknown or inaccessible. No longer do one have to travel to Japan to learn about Buddhism or to material on Islam. One can see and experience such religions in many a high street, and, if sufficiently moved, convert without uprooting oneself or being ostracised.

The second development is that religion has become a matter of personal choice. People do not automatically follow the faith of their family. It may be the first religion they want, then many will not hesitate to look elsewhere. The old adage that "the faith that prays together stays together" is being replaced by the same old adage that "the faith that prays apart stays apart".

Moreover, religion is being privatised and becoming an individual domain separate from the wider context in which the person operates. The old adage that "the faith that prays together stays together" is being replaced by the same old adage that "the faith that prays apart stays apart".

Today, religion is seen as a personal hobby. Family members will pursue their

A whiff of sour grapes as BMW vows to enter the luxury market

True Brit... Michael Shrimpton's Bentley shows his true colours despite the sale of a British classic

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GOODMAN



VW wins Rolls-Royce race

David Gow
Industrial Editor

BMW, jilted yesterday by Vickers' shareholders over the sale of Rolls-Royce Motors, plans to trigger a war of attrition in the luxury car market with Volkswagen, its conqueror, and Mercedes-Benz.

The three German groups, set to extend their dominance over the European automotive industry, are planning to expand the luxury market by developing new models and taking over smaller rivals.

After seeing its £240 million offer for Rolls-Royce trumped by VW's £470 million agreed bid at an ill-tempered meeting of Vickers shareholders yesterday, BMW said the price being offered for Rolls was "not economically viable". BMW said it was planning to enter the luxury market by other means.

BMW, which already owns Rover, is said to be considering making a 9-series model, while Mercedes-Benz, part of the planned Daimler-Chrysler empire, is well advanced in plans to produce a top-of-the-range car, the Maybach.

But while Mercedes executives see a market of around 4,000 at most for luxury cars, VW plans to boost output of Rolls and Bentley from the current level of 2,000 to 10,000 a year through a promised £1 billion investment over five years. It plans to produce a smaller Bentley, selling at around £85,000, compared with the new £155,000 Silver Seraph from Rolls.

Those pledges were enough to persuade a huge majority of small and institutional investors to accept the VW bid despite calls by a vociferous old guard to keep "the best car in the world" and "some-

thing quintessentially English" in UK hands.

The meeting came close to farce as shareholders were effectively imprisoned within London's Royal Horticultural Hall, where security guards warned participants from even looking out of the windows in case they passed on privileged information through hand signals.

Shareholders milled around as Vickers chairman, Sir Colin Chandler, his board, lawyers and bankers, discussed a £500 million "offer" from the elderly band of English patriots headed by barrister Michael Shrimpton.

Sir Colin, at times supercilious and occasionally angry when accused of being anti-British in selling off "our British heritage to the Germans", adjourned the meeting despite accusing Mr Shrimpton earlier of mounting "an undignified scramble to raise money with no substance to it at all".

Rejecting Mr Shrimpton's offer, Sir Colin said it gave no assurance that money would be forthcoming or about the origins and identities of his backers while VW provided a parent "with engineering capability, resources, expertise in brand-management and a global reach".

Graham Morris, chief executive of Rolls-Royce Motors, who has been asked by VW to stay on, said of Mr Shrimpton: "He's been talking for more than seven months about convincing us to sell the company and we haven't seen a £5 note."

Mr Shrimpton insisted he wanted to carry on the fight but admitted that his options were limited. But Andrew John, Vickers commercial director, said the lawyer's campaign was effectively over.

"We now have a contract with Volkswagen that will proceed to completion."

What they said



'A while ago Henry Royce would have been spinning in his grave at 30 revs a minute. Today he has come down to 10 revs a minute'

Peter Royce (left), the 70-year-old great nephew of Henry Royce



'I hate to see a great British company like Rolls-Royce go abroad. We are all Rolls-Royce supporters in this country'

Michael Shrimpton (right), barrister who headed the enthusiasts' group

Vickers' defence may alert predator

SENIOR executives at Vickers, the defence and engineering group, yesterday expressed hopes that shareholder approval for the near £500 million combined sale of its Rolls-Royce Motors and Cosworth Engines subsidiaries to Volkswagen will persuade the City to fend off would-be predators wanting to make a bid.

Vickers, which has often been seen as a likely target for takeover, has lined up several prospective acquirers for itself — both at

home and abroad — in what are now its core activities of defence and propulsion.

The group is expected to net about £250 million from the combined sale of the Rolls-Royce and Cosworth subsidiaries after returning about £282 million to shareholders.

"You can never say you're safe from any predator wanting to make a bid. But we think the decision to have a public auction and contested bidding for Rolls-Royce has brought in considerably more than the

City had anticipated, and it could persuade them to leave us alone to develop our potential," one group executive said.

Sir Colin Chandler, the group chairman of Vickers, said after the shareholders' extraordinary meeting: "Anybody can try to take us over. But I think the decision we have taken as a management team are the right way forward."

"We have now shed a lot of peripheral businesses and are now able to concentrate our investments and

take the group forward."

But some analysts say that Vickers' defence arm, which makes the Challenger 3 tank, may be vulnerable to a possible takeover attempt.

The defence group needs export orders, they say, to improve earnings following the decision earlier this year by the British, French and German governments to give orders for new army "battlefield taxis" to a consortium including GKN, rather than to one that embraces the Vickers group.

Saturday Notebook

Eddie is pushed right to the limit



Alex Brummer

AS Eddie George settles into his second term of Governor of the Bank of England in July he might well wonder whether the job is worth the candle.

The Bank has been stripped of its role in banking supervision, now shifted to the Financial Services Authority under Howard Davies, organisation of the Government's gilt management has been shifted to the Treasury, as has the large chunk of the official gold and currency reserves.

All this has been contrived by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, and his team so that the Bank can focus on its core function: meeting the inflation target also set by the Government. This will be renewed by the Chancellor, almost certainly at the current 2.5 per cent central rate, in his speech to City bigwigs at the Mansion House next week.

But what has Mr George gained but a second shot at the high-profile job of Governor for which he has spent his life preparing? In the world's other great central banks, most notably the Federal Reserve and the Bundesbank, the governor — or the chairman/president as they are respectively called — are leaders of the pack.

The powerful financial minds who lead from the front come to dominate the institutions which they head. As heads of the central bank and chairman of the policy making committees the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee and the Bundesbank Council, it is their views which count.

This is not just a question of going before Congress twice a year, as Alan Greenspan does, and pronouncing from on high on the future monetary targets and interest rates. It is also about nursing and forging a consensus on the Open Markets Committee, so there is no doubt (whatever the dissent) that the decisions that it makes have Mr Greenspan's approval.

A Federal Reserve chairman who is outwitted — as the conventional wisdom is that Mr George was at Thursday's meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee — has little recourse but to change other members' views or resign.

PRECISELY this situation arose at the Federal Reserve in February 1986. The then Fed chairman, the formidable Paul Volcker, who is widely credited with having rescued the US from hyperinflation and a dollar crisis in 1979-80 — found himself in a minority at the monthly Open Market Committee gathering.

The appointees of President Reagan, several supply-siders and academic monetarists, voted for the first time in the Volcker period against his advice, arguing for an interest rate cut when the chairman still had inflationary concerns.

Mr Volcker refused to accept on the grounds that it would be internationally inappropriate if the majority insisted, he would have to consider resignation, in a move which would have upset global markets.

At a second session with his opponents, with the resignation possibility hovering over

the committee, Mr Volcker persuaded his fellow committee members to hold off until such time as he had a chance of persuading his Bundesbank and Bank of England counterparts that it was right for rates to be lowered in a coordinated way.

The Fed chairman won the immediate battle, rates were eventually lowered slowly in tandem with the other main global economies, and Mr Volcker was off the hook — although at that point his eventual replacement by Republican Alan Greenspan was seen as inevitable.

Mr Volcker was well into his second term before opponents could defeat him. Mr George, if the guesses are correct, was outvoted before it even began. Because the Monetary Policy Committee has been incomplete until this month Mr George was able to use his casting vote to prevent base rates rising from 7.25 per cent.

As soon as the mix was changed, by the addition of John Vickers, he by all accounts found himself in the minority. This is an uncomfortable position for any central banker. Governor George will now have to go before the City at the Mansion House next week, and the Treasury Select Committee shortly afterwards, to defend a decision for which he did not vote.

It is irrelevant that the Government, both privately and publicly supporting the Bank's move, has established the MPC as a legal, independent entity which can only be over-ruled in the most exceptional circumstances. It must accept its views.

WHAT defeat does, if that proves to be the case, is to diminish Mr George at the expense of one of his deputies, Mervyn King, whose views that wage demands and consumption in the UK have become the majority view, perhaps because he has managed to influence the Treasury in appointing like-minded individuals such as Mr Vickers.

In creating the MPC, Mr Brown and his advisers had several objectives. Firstly, they wanted a cool, detached rates, also the nursing and forging a consensus on the Open Markets Committee, so there is no doubt (whatever the dissent) that the decisions that it makes have Mr Greenspan's approval.

A Federal Reserve chairman who is outwitted — as the conventional wisdom is that Mr George was at Thursday's meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee — has little recourse but to change other members' views or resign.

Secondly, in the pursuit of a monetary strategy Mr Brown's holy grail — they wanted to create processes which would minimise the political damage of what has been done. Thus the Government can distance itself from interest rate changes if it does not like (it apparently did not mind this one).

Finally, it liked the American model for setting interest rates — down to the six-week gap between the meetings and the publication of minutes, the release of voting patterns and the public hearings.

What it failed to comprehend is that all of this could snap in its face. The Federal Reserve and Bundesbank models have strong chairman building a consensus. The UK model has Governor with masses of pragmatic experience of markets — Asia, Russia, and international payments — and a deputy focused on fan charts chronicling the probabilities of hitting an inflation target.

In the globalised economy that is not good enough. Practical considerations and politics — giving the Governor the benefit of the doubt — have to be part of the process. Much more of this and Mr George's position will be untenable.

Royal Worcester is told to serve everyone equally

Teresa Hunter

ONE of Britain's leading porcelain makers has become the latest target of an Office of Fair Trading crusade to stamp out price-fixing.

Fresh from its skirmish with electrical goods makers and retailers, the OFT reprimanded Royal Worcester yesterday for attempting to control the price of its decorative tableware, after a discount catalogue firm accused the company of refusing to supply it with plates.

OFT director-general John Bridgeman said: "Resale price maintenance operates against the interest of consumers by keeping prices high and protecting inefficiency. I will not hesitate to act where I come across it."

The Office of Fair Trading warned Royal Worcester that it was illegal to set minimum sale prices and to blacklist price-cutting traders. Mr Bridgeman sought assurances from the company, which dates back to the 18th century, that it will not interfere with prices in future.

Royal Worcester has agreed to write to all its dealers to reassure them that they are free to sell, advertise and display any of the firm's goods at whatever price they choose.

Mr Bridgeman warned that in future he would impose

much tougher penalties on offenders. "The competition bill currently passing through Parliament will give me enhanced powers to investigate resale price maintenance. In future I can impose fines of up to 10 per cent of turnover on offending companies."

A spokesman for Royal Worcester, which employs nearly 800 people, said: "We do not operate a minimum resale price and have never done so. But we were nevertheless happy to give the OFT the assurances it required."

"We understand there was a particular problem with one catalogue company which we believe was the result of a simple misunderstanding."

"We are happy for our retailers to sell any of our goods at whatever price they choose."

An OFT spokesman said: "The most serious side of the problem is the way manufacturers simply refuse to supply retailers or catalogue sellers which wish to cut the price of their goods, and this is what we believe happened in this case."

Shares in Staffordshire-based Portmeirion Potteries fell 12 per cent after Mary Lorraine Hughes, the chief executive, warned that first-half profits would be considerably lower than last year's. She is resigning over policy differences with the rest of the board.

Bids brewing for Ushers

Lisa Buckingham

THREE senior executives of Ushers are in line to share a windfall of £9 million following a number of takeover approaches to the Trowbridge brewer. Shares rose 25p to 127p after the company was forced by the takeover to reveal that it had received "unsolicited approaches".

One offer is believed to have been tabled by Alchemy, the US-backed venture capital group set up by John Moulton, who is a non-executive director of Ushers.

He owns 100,000 shares in the brewer and has a financial interest in some of the shares held by Schroder Ventures. Ushers' largest investor with a 28.2 per cent stake, Mr Moulton was a former executive of Schroders. Other leading shareholders include SBC (now merging with UBS) and PFM, the fund management arm of UBS.

The approach to Ushers, which operates 534 pubs and produces beers such as Manns Original, 1824 Peculiar and India Pale Ale, comes a day after another regional brewer and hotel combine, Vaux, also said it was being pursued by a potential predator.

Stagnation in the beer market is prompting consolidation. The new breed of "pub companies", set up following the Government's beer orders which forced the big brewers to divest themselves of many of their tied pubs, have been aggressive purchasers.

But brewers and pub companies are also being sought by financial bidders, such as Nomura and, now, Alchemy, which raise money against the value of the assets and repay the bonds out of cash flow.

The Campaign for Real Ale protested that "carpetbaggers" might be holding Britain's regional beer fortunes to

hostage. Iain Loe of Camra said: "Vaux and Ushers have in the last years provided choice and variety to the beer drinker and pub-goer and it would be a tragedy if all that was thrown away in the pursuit of a fast buck."

It was not clear last night whether the Ushers' management, led by Roger North, would support a bid.

Ushers was formed in 1824 by Thomas Usher but was taken over in 1960 by Watneys and later by Grand Metropolitan, which then sold its brewing business to Courage. The present group — a management buy-out from Courage — floated last year.

Brown digs in heels over Euro-tax

Martin Walker in Brussels

GORDON BROWN warned his fellow finance ministers yesterday that he was prepared to veto a Europe-wide tax proposal unless it was modified to safeguard the City of London's dominant position in Europe's financial markets.

After intense lobbying by British bankers, who fear that the EU's tax plan could drive offshore a Eurobond market worth more than £1,000 billion, the Chancellor said that he agreed with the EU goal of curbing tax evasion — but not at that price.

"The proposal as it stands would be damaging and

would provoke a net migration of financial services outside the EU," said Roger Miles, a spokesman for the British Bankers' Association.

The European Commission is making little secret of its ambition for an EU-wide taxation system, believing that the logic of a coming single currency and single market tends inexorably towards it. This position, however, has clear implications for a low-tax country such as Britain.

"We have concentrated on macro-economic policy and budget discipline to launch the euro, and then we turned to labour market reform. Now comes the turn

of the other issues, the structure of markets and the European tax system," said Marie Monti, European Commissioner for the single market.

"We have to stop the tendency to cut taxes on capital. If this goes too far, governments would have to increase taxes on labour — and thus on jobs and businesses."

The capital of the European Investment Bank was heavily increased from £40 billion to almost £70 billion yesterday, allowing it almost to double its lending to some £160 billion, partly in order to help finance EU enlargement into eastern Europe.

Motorola sheds 15,000 Motorola, which manufactures electronic products from mobile phones to computer chips, is to cut 15,000 jobs worldwide — about 10 per cent of its workforce.

BBC's digital deal The BBC and Sky agreed terms under which the satellite broadcaster will transmit the corporation's digital services. The deal means that the BBC will pay an undisclosed amount for Sky, which is controlled by Rupert Murdoch, to carry its programmes.

News in brief

FSA imposes two life bans

In its first action since going live on Monday, the Financial Services Authority has banned James O'Riordan and William Newton from investment activity for life. The two men were described as "reckless in the extreme" with hundreds of thousands of pounds of clients' money.

They also used PAYE and national insurance contributions from their staff to keep their Global Foreign Exchange Corporation afloat, the FSA said.

Global collapsed last summer, owing about 50 clients more than £300,000.

Seasonal spread

Park Foods, the Merseyside supplier of Christmas hampers on credit, is to create 1,000 jobs over the next two years by opening a call centre in Birkenhead as part of a move into consumer credit and away from its seasonal business. It already offers small loans through door-to-door collectors. After announcing a fall in profit from £2.6 million to £5.67 million, chairman Peter Johnson said he was stepping down to a non-executive role at the company which made his reputed £100 million fortune.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.88	Germany 2.81	Malaysia 6.45	Singapore 2.71
Austria 12.80	Greece 48.94	Mexico 6.22	South Africa 9.15
Belgium 54.08	Hong Kong 12.32	Netherlands 3.161	Spain 127.70
Canada 2.225	India 66.04	New Zealand 3.08	Sweden 12.44
Cyprus 0.631	Ireland 1.116	Norway 11.27	Switzerland 2.39
Denmark 10.79	Israel 5.29	Portugal 227.85	Turkey 405.000
Finland 6.643	Italy 2.795	Saudi Arabia 8.03	USA 1.92
France 9.424			

Supplied by Reuters (excluding rupee, shilling and malay)

online



Raggle-tag
Rolls owner
can't stop
the VW
takeover
Page 11

Eclipse of the sun nation

**Alex Brummer and
Jonathan Watts in
Tokyo on the shadow
falling over Japan's
industrial power-base**

THE season of Japanese companies' annual meetings has traditionally been a time for polite bowing and mutual congratulations as profits headed inexorably upwards. But not this year.

When shareholders of the car, electronics, airlines and construction power-houses gather in Tokyo hotels this month there will be an air of cold reality about the proceedings. The great conjuring trick at the heart of Japan's post-second world war reconstruction, manufacturing and exporting miracle is being as brutally exposed as it was in South Korea last November.

The success, including the huge investment budgets lauded by admiring westerners, has been built on a sandcastle of cheap and largely unregulated bank debt that amounts to a vast hidden subsidy to industry.

But the game is up. Not long ago Nissan was a colossus bestriding the industrial world. Armed with low-cost bank loans, it invested around the globe, even building a plant capable of producing 450,000 vehicles a year in the US, at Smyrna in Tennessee. It was similarly ambitious in Britain, where it has invested heavily in the North-east of England.

Its expansion, however, has been built on cheap borrowing, with 4 trillion yen (£17.5 billion) of liabilities on its books. When the Japanese economy stagnated in the 1990s, its home market shrunk as incomes were squeezed and consumption slumped.

Traditionally, Japanese companies have been able to export their way out of difficulty. But in this case Nissan found it could not. Every extra car it exported affected production at plants somewhere else in the world. In effect, by raising exports it was competing with itself.

The Tokyo stock market was in a slump, and investors and bankers became more anxious about Nissan's overstretched balance-sheet and its long-term future.

With the possibility that bank credit-lines might be cut Nissan decided on drastic action — and the sort of restructuring that is virtually unknown in Japan. When trading losses reached 1.3 billion yen last year production was cut by 25 per cent in the US market in an attempt to run down stocks and become more competitive.

Ratings agency Standard & Poor's, which is relied up by bankers worldwide to help make risk assessments of corporate debt, evaluated Nissan's credit-worthiness as triple B minus, one step away from junk bond status and a classification normally reserved for the highest-risk financial firms, not a world class manufacturing and exporting group.

Despite restructuring plans the share price continued to fall, and S&P in its latest note said the outlook was even more negative.

A company that swept all before it is now seen as a spent force: a possible soft bid-target for a European or US car manufacturer.

Nissan is by no means



Shipping cars from Oppama in May. Nissan found out that it could not export its way out of trouble — and was left with a debt of £1.5 billion

alone. Profits and loss accounts which showed gains in trillions of yen have turned red. Foreign marauders who were once excluded from owning businesses in Japan are being welcomed with open arms. The brass plates of once distinguished financial houses, such as Yamauchi and Nippon, are being removed altogether or forced to share space with Merrill Lynch and Travelers.

Many of Japan's best-known firms are in a similar situation. At least 90 have S&P ratings below triple B,

among them All Nippon Airways, Sumitomo Real Estate, nine of the biggest insurance firms and more than a dozen industrial corporations.

The list also covers 22 banks, including global businesses such as the Asahi, Sakura, Daiwa, Dai-ichi Kangyo, Tokai and Fuyo banks and securities firms Daiwa and Nikko. In the case of the latter, the US conglomerate Travelers, which is soon to join with Citicorp, has just grabbed a 25 per cent stake for \$1.6 billion (£1 billion).

"The situation is pretty

serious," admitted a senior finance ministry official in Tokyo. "What worries us is that the proportion of good companies is diminishing."

In recent weeks the yen has plunged to a seven-year low of more than 139 to the dollar. Some experts, including US treasury officials in private, predict that one dollar will soon buy 150 yen. The jobless rate rose this week to a post-war record of 4.1 per cent, at which on some measures it is higher than in America.

The increase in unemployment follows an unprece-

dent number of bankruptcies, including the collapse of Yamachi Securities, the oldest of Japan's "big four" brokerage houses.

The situation is likely to get worse before it gets better. "Japan is either on the edge of a deflationary spiral or already inside it," said Peter Morgan, economist at HSBC Securities Japan, citing the declining prices that are likely to push down profits and lead to more bankruptcies and unemployment.

At the heart of the problem is the sickness of the financial sector. According to conservative self-assessments, banks face more than 77 trillion yen in bad loans. Hokkaido Tokai Bank, the nation's 10th-largest commercial bank, has already collapsed under the load.

The government has flooded the market with liquidity and put aside 30 trillion yen to shore up the banks' capital bases. But this may not be enough to prevent up to 20 more banks failing — more than 10 per cent of Japan's financial institutions.

"The basic perception is that the situation is not going to get any better," said Kichiro Murashima, an economist at the Nomura Research Institute. He fears that the real extent of the bad loan problem could exceed 100 trillion yen — in which case the banking system would be effectively insolvent, and many clients — the big construction and industrial groups — would be in serious trouble.

"That would pose a risk to the global financial system, because Japanese banks have a very big exposure to world markets," notes Murashima.

Such fears have persisted for years, but they are starting to have an impact on the previously robust manufacturing sector, both psychologically, as consumers prefer to save their money rather than

are so severe that they are affecting its top companies.

As the banks are being forced by the markets and the Group of Seven industrialised countries quickly to clean up Japan's financial system, the holes in the banks' balance sheets — and those of commercial enterprises — have been exposed.

Gloom on the financial markets has been worsened by the knowledge that Japan faces immense structural problems. These include the question of how to deal with the world's fastest-ageing population, a social security system strained by rising unemployment, and a budget deficit which is ballooning as other industrialised countries tame their deficits.

In public, the government of premier Ryutaro Hashimoto has emphasised that it is considering yet another stimulus package, to give the economy a soft landing.

In private, senior members of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party admit that a shake-out is inevitable, even if it means failures. But with Japan's upper-house election less than a month away, the government will put off the inevitable until the votes are in. Only then is it likely to become clear just how far Japan Inc has declined, and what effect it will have on the world economy.

But with every day lost the stakes become higher and the risk of depression, deflation and commercial disaster grow greater.

**'Japan is either
on the edge of a
deflationary
spiral or already
inside it'**

Peter Morgan, HSBC

spend it, and practically, because the credit crunch is pushing firms out of business.

"The reluctance of banks to lend money has hit even the healthy manufacturing sector," noted Shinji Sakai, managing director of Toyota's overseas operations. "If this persists, it is difficult to see where things will go."

Japanese industry has long embraced both world-beating exporters and inefficient domestic firms. However, despite the weak yen, the performances of blue-chip firms, including Hitachi and NEC, has declined over the past year, suggesting that the nation's economic problems

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Zurich	S.F.	218	382	703
Brussels	B.F.	4,370	7,840	14,060
Amsterdam	FLG	286	465	835
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43
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Quick Crossword No. 8767

Across

1 Hidden (6)

4 Acquire (6)

9 Brown sugar concoction (7)

10 Sacked (5)

11 Vertical structure (5)

12 Absorb (7)

13 Pears in milk (anag) — nautical tool (11)

16 Remote (7)

20 Habitually unsuccessful person (5)

22 Musical work for the stage (5)

23 Deprived (7)

Down

1 Find (6)

2 Fling (5)

3 Figure expressing number (7)

6 Confuse mentally (5)

8 Bubble obstructing flow in pipe (7)

7 Disbeliever in clothes (6)

9 Other possible option (11)

14 Collection of pus in cavity (7)

15 Bird with large beak (7)

16 Hateful (5)

24 Plant ("Open —") (8)

25 Vigour (6)

17 Crisp or short-tempered (8)

19 Warning signal (5)

21 Track of animal (5)

Solution No. 8766

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سكرا من الامل

Saturday June 6 1998

Raggle-taggle
Rolls owners
can't stop
the VW
takeover
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Books

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saturday

June 6 1998



Til death us do part? You'd be lucky. Marriage is on the rocks, says novelist **Deborah Moggach**. We can't force people to stay together, so our only hope is to make divorce less agonising

Kiss and break up

The divorce rate is soaring in Britain. With almost 40 per cent of marriages collapsing, ours is the highest rate in Europe. What's happening to our families? Marriage is in meltdown. Is there anything we can do to save it? The Government is in a moral panic. In the past few months, it has been marshalling its forces to try to tackle what it sees as an epidemic.

This week we learned that one of the Government's proposals is to deal with the problems of dysfunctional relationships before they arise. Jack Straw hinted at handing starter-packs to couples on their wedding day. He thinks that forewarned is forearmed, and that we should enter the married state well prepared.

His information pack would include the phone number of Relate — rather a dampener on the big day, like showing photos of mangled bodies to those about to embark on a car journey. I don't know what else he has in mind, maybe vouchers to be exchanged for household tasks, a list of conversational topics for when there's nothing good on TV and emergency drills for when your partner mucks up the video pre-recording.

Our Home Secretary also feels that two days' notice is not enough before a civil wedding, and that more time for reflection and preparation should be given. Also

that the service itself should be re-examined, and maybe re-worded to emphasise the commitment of marriage. The whole thing can be taken too lightly.

Perhaps he's right. Maybe a big church ceremony, with its wonderful words and sense of solemnity, is a more profound experience and will start off a relationship with more nourishment, like that new compost that claims to nurture stronger plants because it has a slow-release fertiliser.

Jack Straw wants to emphasise the weight and commitment of marriage. Admirable though this is, I think he's missed the point. For a start, people don't rush into marriage nowadays. They did in the past because they were dying to jump into bed together. Nowadays they've probably lived together for years beforehand; marriage is hardly an impulsive act.

We don't need a guidance pack. It's not information that we lack. We're bombarded with information and, when we're in love, we don't take any notice of it. Splitting up? It won't happen to us. When you are in love you are blind to other possibilities, that's the point of love. How impossible it is to imagine ever falling out of love. Others might fail, but with us it will be different.

In Glossop, a course in marriage preparation failed, and has had its funding cut. "We had stands at bridal fairs and GPs' surgeries, but we didn't get much of a response," Laurie Gill, project manager at Glossop Marriage Resource, said.

"The parents thought it was a great idea but the young couples said, 'What would our peer group say?' Or they'd say, 'We've been living together for three years, we know everything about each other'."

I could have told them that and saved them a lot of money. All these efforts are tackling the problem the wrong way, at the wrong time. It will take more than an information pack to slow down our escalating divorce rate. People are bailing out of the sinking Titanic of marriage in huge numbers — 155,000 divorces were registered in 1995, up from about 30,000 in 1961 — and despite the handwringing of ministers, there's very little we can do to stop them.

Advice at the beginning won't help; nor will making divorce more difficult — divorce is ghastly in every way, why make it even more painful? Counselling might help a few, but not most. And we no longer even feel shame about splitting up, because everybody's doing it. The old role models for good behaviour have disappeared. Take the royal family; hardly a shining example of marital constancy. Celebrity bust-ups enthral us: Paul Gascoigne, Anthea Turner, Rupert Murdoch. And our parents aren't behaving much better. The quest for happiness is no longer confined to the young; nowadays everyone is at it — grandfathers making fools of themselves with younger women and grandmothers joining assertiveness classes and learning about resentment.

We can no longer manage the long haul. Ten years is fine; it's 20 years that causes the problems. In the old days it wouldn't have happened. Lifespans were shorter; in 20 years one of us would have died. And marriage was a different, less demanding institution. It was simply an economic and dynastic necessity, and if you loved each other that was a bonus. People didn't place such huge demands on each other — a husband didn't have to be lover, father, companion, washer-up, caring new man yet virile with it, capable of holding down a job and listening to his wife while she tells him all about hers. There was none of our vocabulary of dissatisfaction. Nor was there the introspection. Nowadays we lift up the plants of our relationships so often to examine their roots that, in the end, the plants wither away from the disturbance.

Our fuse is shorter; our attention span is shorter. We bail out at the smallest provocation. Nineties marriage is as febrile as MTV. Our perspective has profoundly changed in the past few years. My sister, who works in a hospital, had a CV recently from someone seeking a job. This woman cited as proof of her stability, "I have lived with my partner for five years." A few years ago to live unmarried with somebody was an example of *instability* — it was called living in sin — and five years was hardly a sign of staying power. Some people still manage it. They get together, they stay together, they're happy. They love each other; they're the lucky ones. I know several couples like this; when they come to supper they talk to each other as they walk up the front path.

What's their secret? They say it's luck. They've found their soulmate. They're good friends. They're best friends. They say they keep a bit of themselves mysterious from each other. They simply know how to compromise, adapt and give each other the benefit of the doubt.

Many of us, however, have lost the stamina for a long marriage. We've lost the good will and the selflessness; we've lost the aptitude for compromise and forgiveness. Peter McCarthy, at the Centre for Family Studies at Newcastle University, writes that marriage has changed from a structure with defined familial responsibilities to the pursuit of personal happiness. We put ourselves and our needs first, even before the happiness of our children.

I've just written a TV serial where marriages are breaking up

all over the place. Everybody seems to be committing adultery. At one point Sheila Hancock, playing a woman whose husband has just left her for a younger woman, wails "Why can't men just keep it in their trousers?" — a remark that may find an echo in many hearts, and which of course can be applied to women as much as men, for they are even more likely to bail out.

As the divorce lawyer Vanessa Lloyd Platt has put it: "Over the past 20 years there's been a complete change in the format of relationships. No one is prepared to compromise any more. Men and women are both standing their ground in different ways, and because people are being so stubborn they are just getting divorced and relationships are breaking down. There's a major problem over what roles men and women perceive they should be playing — there's no clear guideline. There are more stresses on marriage than ever before."

There's no way we can turn back the clock. Unlike elephants, we no longer mate for life. Not 40 per cent of us, anyway. Given that this is the state of things, how can we deal with it? Principally, how do we minimise its damage to our children? We have to accept that many marriages are going to end. What we have to address, now, is not how to prepare for marriage but how to dismantle it with minimal damage; we have to learn to be bomb disposal experts.

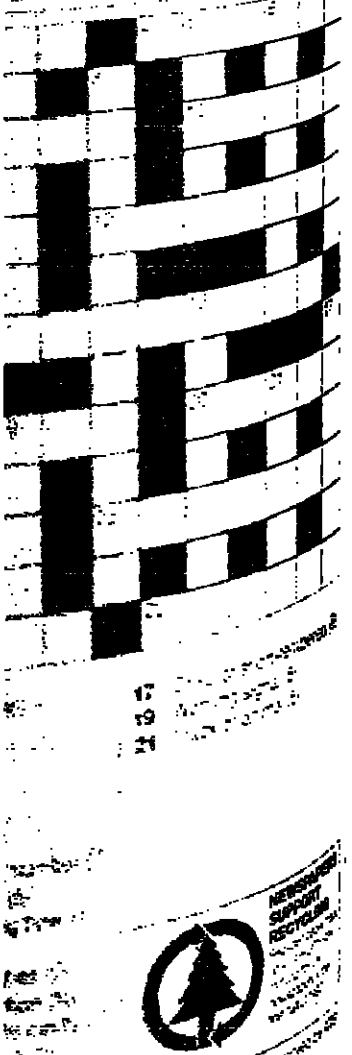
For this reason I would suggest that Jack Straw does not give out

starter packs, but ender packs. It's during the splitting-up that we need help. The lessons are harder to learn because we are no longer made generous by love. Affection has died; we are out in the cold, flailing around in a tempest of guilt, anger and recriminations. It's at this point that we need help, for the sake of the children, our innocent victims.

In my pack, I would have an information leaflet. In it I would never use that ghastly phrase "broken home". It would say that just because a marriage has ended, this doesn't make it a failed marriage. It can be a successful relationship that has simply ended. If one thing around accusations the past can be poisoned, like acid leaking out of a sealed container into the sea, it can spread into the past and this can confuse and distress children. They will reflect on their own past and distrust it — was it all a sham, was that holiday really happy or can they no longer believe anything? They desperately need reassurance.

Children can be deeply traumatised by their parents splitting up. I don't want to sound glib about divorce. Of course it should be avoided, if at all possible; we should do our best to stop it happening. It can tear families apart and devastate young lives. But there are ways of easing our passage through it. Children can be damaged for life but they can survive, relatively unscathed. It depends on how it is done. In my ender pack I would lay down some rules. One: never, page 14

8767





Yes, but does it offer a challenge?

RECLINING NUDE (DETAIL) BY ANTHONY WILLIAMS, FROM THE ROYAL ACADEMY SUMMER EXHIBITION 1998

Is the Royal Academy summer exhibition a waste of space?

Yes

Simon Grant
Art critic

No

Tom Phillips
Royal Academician

Dear Tom Phillips, Let's cut to the quick. The Royal Academy summer show is rancid and we all know it. You are a sensible man and, I am sure, think most of the stuff that comes through your Piccadilly frontage shouldn't be there. Why, oh why, are we subjected to it every year? It is the art of curtain-twitchers and blue-rinsers, who like the occasional ooh and aah but nothing too naughty. Why does your coterie of Academicians think it necessary to heap volleys of schmalz on us?

It is tea towel art, motorway service station art. It is the faceless art of the hotel bedroom, visual muzak that affects and offends no one, the sort of art Alan Partridge would have in his lounge. This art wears itself like a face with an apologetic smile. Surely, surely, surely it has to be better than this?

Yours sincerely,
Simon Grant

Dear Simon Grant, Instead of cutting to the quick, you cut to the dead; dead issues, generalisations, and that last dead resort of pseudo-critical prose, sarcasm. I think I could answer a letter about the strange mixed harvest (as the RA summer exhibition by its rules must be) if you had met its challenge. To be in the middle of the work of living artists and to find your unguided way to quality is not easy. History has nicely sifted most other exhibitions that we put on.

Recently, we had a show called *Sensation*, where, although the works had passed through the filter of one dedicated collector's taste, the ones were still on the visitor to sort out the lasting from the transient. I suspect the proportion of one to the other was not that different from the summer exhibition. I don't maintain that all the exhibits in the current show are masterpieces, or even that half or a quarter of them are.

We show only 10 per cent of what is submitted and would be very fortunate if 10 per cent of that were to stand the test of time. It is an open exhibition, the last

remaining full-scale salon in the world to which anyone may submit. In that sense, it is fashionably democratic and must be approached with an open spirit. Your letter would suggest it is all somehow the same, whereas it offers an amazing variety of experiences. Look again. You are subjected to nothing except a few yards of walking in quest of that which might enrich you.

Yours sincerely,
Tom Phillips

Dear Tom, I certainly would not think that the issues are dead. Some of the art might be, but we are talking about how an international institution presents itself. And after many yards of walking around this year's offering, the summer exhibition is still locked in its own dreamy cuteness, dripping with sentimentality or thrusting with simple expressionist scratches. Open-minded? I don't think so. Accepting the new? Show me the evidence.

I appreciate the summer exhibition is inherently flawed. What gets me is that it aims to show art that values draughtsmanship (which I believe still to be important), but doesn't deliver it. The half-baked gestures, the unsubtle narratives and easy armchair imagery bother me. Too much works on immediate visual seduction. Not enough seems to offer a challenge, a sense of ambiguity or give the viewer mental space, except the very beautiful early Victor Pasmore paintings.

If you want me to be specific: Peter Howson's heavy-handed expressionist drawing, called *Muslim Woman*, typifies the kind of art that gives us heavy breathing about what to think and what to feel. I don't find this art a challenge. Art can change the way we see our world and the way we see ourselves. I find most artists in this exhibition demonstrate a visual politeness that one might describe as being pleasant.

Yours,
Simon

PS. Isn't a salon somewhere one might go for a hair tint?

Dear Simon, I'm not sure whether by "the new" you mean the currently fashionable or the novel. According to your last sentence, you exclude politeness and being pleasant. I would think your preferred art to be aggressive or obnoxious had you not singled out something we agree upon, the early paintings of Victor Pasmore. He was a passionate member of the Royal Academy, where he exhibited each summer works independent of fashion.

Art moves from one novelty to another, and during an artist's lifetime he or she may rise and fall in favour more than once. Carol Weight, whose death is memorialised this year, was only rediscovered by the young towards the end of his life. Hockney, also a member, may slowly become the Frank Brangwyn of our age.

The content of the exhibition is in the hands of artists themselves. The show relies on what is sent in, as well as the members' own work. Peter Howson sent his work in. You did not (if I read your description correctly) like his drawing. Many do, and he shows internationally. I can't tell from what you say exactly how narrow a church you wish the Royal Academy to be; whom you want it to include and whom exclude.

You have not mentioned architecture. What other public forum presents to so many people major works such as the model for the Millennium Dome, Daniel Libeskind's far-from-polite design for the new wing of the V & A and Norman Foster's London Square projects?

We can only sensibly debate the weaknesses of the summer exhibition if you can acknowledge some of its strengths. I maintain that, despite some inevitable duds, it is a show which includes exciting things; you, that all is rapid except for the work of the recently dead.

Yours,
Tom

Dear Tom, The word "new" I quoted from your own in-house mission statement. I would see it as incorporating a wide variety of disciplines, reflecting the ever-expanding cultural context within which art is made. This means including photographs, installations, video and multi-media works. The exhibition needs to move away from the notion of the artist only using a brush or chisel.

We are not talking about fashion here. Art does indeed move from one novelty to another, but that is no excuse for the abysmal quality of much work on show. By

quality, I mean skill (an unfashionable and un-PC word I know). In the Academy's original 18th-century document, "The Instrument of Foundation", it states that the exhibition "shall be open to all Artists of distinguished merit". This does not mean one has to narrow the selection, showing work by established artists, but open it up to the kind of art that has been around for most of this century.

I would agree with you that the architecture section is a good forum, perhaps the best section. However, I don't think that talking about the good parts is a sensible way to debate these issues. Yes, there are one or two sound works, but let's see a summer exhibition aware of the wider outside world, keen to accept the new and aware that a tendency for complacency and dilettanteism (which William Hogarth accused Sir Joshua Reynolds of 200 years ago) needs to be fought.

I hear that there are rumblings that future shows may only show work by Academicians only. That's not very democratic, is it?

Yours,
Tom

Dear Simon, I begin to wonder whether you have actually been to the summer exhibition. Having initially dismissed its contents in toto you gradually concede that it contains good and interesting things. Now you take up the theme of materials under the assumption that all is the result of welded brush or chisel. I need only think of my own works on show (made variously of mud, welded wire and treated book pages) to refute that.

To mention the absence of installations in a year when every visitor must pass through an Antony Gormley ensemble piece, which occupies the whole of the courtyard and beyond, is simply perverse.

Writings such as your own directly discourage artists from exhibiting, as if you aimed at a self-fulfilling prophecy. If "skill" is what you seek, I fear that it is often most egregiously displayed in works that manifest little else. Since you desire the new (complete with draughtsmanship), I cannot figure out what would in your eyes be the ideal missing exhibit. Whatever it is, please persuade its manufacturer to submit it next summer.

The summer exhibition will continue as long as we survive. You must come along one year. Yours,
Tom

Smallweed



No doubt there's too much complaining in Britain already, but whatever the present quotient, Smallweed welcomes the arrival of an organisation called Mediawatch, set up by six leading mental health charities to keep a critical eye on what the media says about mental illness. Much of the coverage of mental health in our newspapers is disgracefully sloppy. For every thoughtful and useful appraisal there are hundreds of blundering references by people who neither know nor care what they're talking about. Mental illness is still confused with what we used to call mental handicap (now termed learning difficulty). The term schizophrenia, except when used in the context of murders, is most often employed to mean Jekyll one moment and Hyde the next, which hardly begins to describe what this condition involves.

Among recent institutions described in allegedly serious newspapers as "schizophrenic" are only two tracts of Colombia, the Ken and Barbara Pollett approach to socialism, the wardrobe of a contributor to the *Independent*, an evening of dance staged by a Belgian choreographer, and gyrations on the FTSE index. In every case, the subtext is Jekyll and Hyde. Even worse is the jolly way in which it's evoked. "I'm feeling a bit schizophrenic on this," columnists confess with a smirk. They would never say "I'm feeling a bit cancerous here" or "I'm feeling a bit HIV-positive".

British observers of the recent elections there were shaken to see graffiti on walls across Montenegro supporting the SNP. But closer inspection showed that the SNP there is the Socialist Party of Montenegro, one of 17 groups which put up registered candidates. Others included the Party of the Human Way, the Party for the Protection of Savings Deposits and Social Security of Citizens of the Republic of Montenegro, and the Party of Foreign Exchange Depositors of Montenegro.

Some lists united separate parties, as in the Union of Democratic Muslims - International Democratic Union, Party of National Equality ticket. Party of National Equality is another possible name for what Smallweed has termed the Hatto-Hutto Party, designed to fill the gap in the British political line-up where the Labour Party used to be before it fell into the hands of the liquidators. Evidence that this organisation is urgently needed has multiplied in the past few days - from the Government's frantic pronouncement of the teaching "private spending good, public spending bad" to the desperate sympathy on the Commons back benches so valiantly punctured on Wednesday by Andrew Mackinlay.

There's another precedent, though, which I commend to the Hatto-Huttos. At the end of the last century an organisation arose which called itself the New Party. Get rid of the House of Lords. No plural voting; no fancy franchises; no university constituencies; one man, one vote, and one woman, one vote; a heavy progressive income tax and death duties more so. One supporter suggested they call themselves the Isocrats, the party of equality. That would do very well for the Hattersley party. And by pure serendipity, a letter has just arrived from Epping which would furnish them with a slogan. The front

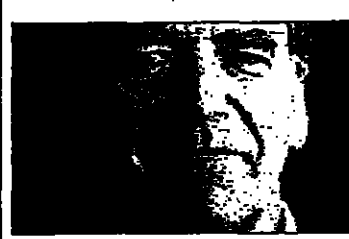
of the Hotel de Ville in the Place de la Mairie at Aix-en-Provence carries not just the familiar words: Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité, but two others: *Généralité* and *Probité*. My informant grousing adds "on the other side of the Place is the Rue Vauvrayes, but that is another story."

Few newspapers, apart from this one, bothered to note the lesser appointments made by William Hague when he named his Shadow Cabinet. For those who read the small print there were significant changes. For the first time, Lord Atlee and Lord Harewood are sitting together on a Tory front bench. Their joint appearance suggested to Smallweed that young Hague might have been trying with a fantasy shadow cabinet in which few of the present incumbents would have survived. In their present predicament, the Tories could hardly do worse. Leader of the Opposition: the late Sir Donald (later Lord Beaconsfield, but they'd have to soft-pedal on that). Shadow foreign secretary: the late Lord Palmerston (officially a Liberal, but no matter). Shadow Health secretary: the late Sir Henry Willink, one of the architects of the post-war welfare state. Shadow secretary for Wales: W Hague. ... Disappointingly, I have now ascertained that the Atlee is Clem's grandson, the Home the son of Sir Alec. Even so, it's a start.

Various organisations, I see, are offering ways of getting yourself out of the country, or at least that bit that gets television, for the World Cup. I respond much more readily if they offered similar schemes to help me avoid that Anniversary on August 31. Already with almost three months to go the Diana industry is unleashing its unparalleled repertoire of exploitative tat. Trouble is, it is also predicted that the orchestrated hysterics may also infect many countries across the world. Anyone for Tierra del Fuego?

The Readers' Editor on... The front page One we did earlier

Ian Mayes
Open door



MUCH OF the romance of newspapers centres around the front page. "Hold Page 1!" doesn't set the pulse racing in quite the same way. The front is, nearly always, the page that changes most in the planning stages as the day trundles towards the deadlines of the evening. It often changes again for later editions once it has passed into the hands of the night editor after initial publication.

It is the page - forgive the truism - on which we put the things that we want to tell you about first and most urgently. Obviously we try to do that in a way that arrests attention. When you are drawing conclusions about the Guardian, based upon our selection and presentation of news over a period, it is fair to regard the front page as a key element. It should tell you a lot about us.

In a sober and considered manner, we have to select and present our material in a way that is still arresting, but appropriate to the content - which is, indeed, often horrifying or shocking as events of the past week have forcefully reminded us.

I spent Friday last week, a day chosen at random, shadowing the deputy editor (news), on the production of the following day's front page. With a small team of colleagues, and through a series of meetings, usually attended by the

editor, he plays a major part in the presentation - and therefore in setting the tone - of the day's paper. An editor is specifically designated to shape the front page. Prime stories can be appropriated at any time to run on the front or on pages 2 and 3 - pages with a mixed agenda of home and foreign stories, treated as a sequence with the front.

The first meeting of the day, open to anyone, takes place in the editor's office at 10.30. There's immediate interest in the promised conclusion of the General Medical Council's disciplinary inquiry into the case of the three doctors responsible for heart operations on children in Bristol. The acting home news editor tells the meeting that a decision is expected at 2pm.

Whether or not the GMC finds against the doctors who presided over the disastrous death rate - 29 children died in the 53 operations the GMC examined - it is the strongest contender to lead Page 1. The paper will also have to accommodate a two-page background to the case, already written by our health correspondent who has followed it throughout and is now at the GMC awaiting the result.

By the time of the next editorial meeting, the 12.30, there is still no clear indication what the decision will be. The background story has provisionally been given pages 4 and 5. There is a miscellany of fairly strong runners for 2 and 3, which is where most of them end up. The turmoil in Louise Woodward's legal camp is on Page 2 but that is a possible candidate for the front. A story about Solzhenitsyn is noted for Page 3 from the foreign editor's list.

The idea at the moment for Page 1, supposing the GMC story happens, is to strip it across the top of the page, then to run beneath it an unconnected picture, possibly one of a man photographed on London

Bridge as part of an entry for the Turner Prize (it eventually finds a home on Page 6).

At the final formal conference of the day at 4pm, there is still no word from the GMC and its conclusions are now not expected until 5 or 6. Contingency plans are given close consideration. It is possible the GMC decision will be held over until the following day which would mean a major redeployment of stories on our first three pages. But within the hour the verdict is known.

By 5 the health correspondent is back in the office for a quick conference with the news desk. Her background, a package of several thousand words, needs adjusting. She decides to do that first so that the layout of those two pages can be completed while she writes the front page lead.

Photographs are now coming in from the GMC. The original plan to use an unconnected picture is scrapped. The photograph chosen, to run across six columns, shows the senior heart surgeon and his wife outside the GMC while beside them a father holds up a picture of his brain-damaged son. It is a very simple and direct page of a kind the story clearly demanded.

Away from the clamour, the following morning, it looks as though, on this occasion, we got it right. When we get it wrong, invariably you tell us.

Readers may contact the office of the Deputy Editor by telephoning 0171 239 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 9597. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

Kiss and break up

page 13 ever criticise the other parent in front of the children. However badly they have behaved, however bitter you feel, just keep quiet. Save it for your friends. I'm amazed at how many otherwise sensible people I know who slag off their ex while their children are in the room, and who ruthlessly annex their loyalties.

Two: minimise children's feelings of helplessness - I hate the word empowerment, but it applies here. Children are out of control by divorce and it's terrifying. One way to ease this is geographically. If one parent moves out, it's vitally important that they do not move too far. If a child can reach them on foot when they choose to, it gives the child control over the seemingly uncontrollable.

This isn't always possible, but if it can happen, it eases things enormously.

If the parents remain on good terms the children can see each of them little and often; one parent isn't consigned to the odd weekend, when the children sit about with nothing to do, try to make conversation about their week and secretly pine for their friends and their computer.

I would also include an etiquette leaflet for new partners. It would suggest that they do not move into the marital home without a decent interval elapsing. In fact, it is a much better idea if they don't move in at all. When my marriage ended, my new partner and I lived apart for 10 very happy years until he died. We just visited each other. I didn't want to foist him on to my children, who were then six and eight. It didn't seem fair. Just because I loved him, why should they? Neither did I want to foist them on to him - he had already had a family and step-family of his own. I'm sure he didn't want any more.

There was also a selfish reason lurking under all this. Domesticity



Divorced children can survive the trauma relatively unscathed, but it depends on how it is done

PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON PRENTICE

is such a dampener that I thought our relationship would stay fresh if we never had toicker about my children's table manners or whose turn it was to get the car serviced. We were visitors to each other's homes and visitors always behave better, because they never take each other for granted.

If they have to move in, they should not try to usurp the absent parent or take his or her place. A new partner should respect a child's privacy and give them time alone with their parent. There are so many rules about step-parents that they could have a whole book-let to themselves.

I would also include information about lawyers. The gist would be don't have one. Even the most civilised of separations are sabotaged by lawyers' inflammatory, adversarial language. They thrive on conflict. I would suggest a DIY kit instead. Maybe when section 29 of the Family Law Act comes into force things will get better. It states that nobody, with limited exceptions, will get legal

aid to finance a divorce battle over money, property or children without first having the case assessed to see if it can be resolved by mediation.

My ender's pack wouldn't be a depressing document. It would help people step from one stage of life to another. A while ago I read about a ceremony set up in Birmingham, an ending-marriage ceremony. Couples signed off as husband and wife, but re-affirmed themselves as parents. This sounds creepy, but on reflection I think it is a terribly good idea. It recognised the changed circumstances and made something positive out of them.

All this may be easier said than done. It may be impossible for many people to follow a rational approach to divorce. But if we think of separation as a rite of passage, rather than something destructive, it will harm our children less. Maybe they can learn from us, and not repeat our mistakes. For we've passed the stage of asking why we divorce. Now we should be asking how.



The author

Deborah Moggach has published 12 novels, and has just completed her 13th. Her drama about family breakdown, *Close Relations*, is currently being shown on BBC1 on Sunday nights (and is published by Arrow at £5.99); she is adapting Nancy Mitford's *Love in a Cold Climate* as a BBC film. She is divorced, with two grown-up children, and lives in north London.

The Guardian
Inside church mind - the nar
Peter Carty has with a new age cu Brazil. More tea
Anxious? You'll get

Inside this quiet English church they're taking mind-bending drugs in the name of Jesus. Why?

Peter Carty hallucinates with a new age cult from Brazil. More 'tea', vicar?

Behind my eyelids, a vast field of red dots puff out into swirls, which rotate into paisley patterns then transform themselves, with frightening impact, into infinite rows of malevolent dragons, advancing and looming over me. I groan and try to thrust them away with my arms. I feel as though I am suddenly losing control; in a matter of minutes the world and its reference points has vanished, and I am accelerating on a rollercoaster to who knows where.

That's the perception. The reality is that I am at a C of E church in north London, hallucinating under the influence of a little-known drug and surrounded by worshippers dressed in white garments, singing hymns in Portuguese. The good news is that this is a religious ceremony. The bad news is that the hallucinogenic substance is set to wreak havoc on my brain for another five hours.

The worshippers are members of a religious group called Santo Daime, which emerged in Brazil early this century, drawing on the shamanic rituals of indigenous peoples in the Amazon rainforest. It slowly gained a foothold in rural areas there before spreading to cities and finally overseas in the Eighties. Now it is here.

On the face of it, Santo Daime appears to have all that a religion for the new millennium needs: a strong emphasis on environmentalism, an equally fashionable New Age focus on the Virgin Mary and a direct and simple route to the divine provided by its sacrament, the hallucinogenic mixture known as ayahuasca.

Members believe, with no sense of irony, that their religion could help put an end to drug addiction, as well as other symptoms of collapse and disorder in modern society. Ayahuasca means vine of the soul in the native Indian Quechua language and is also known as caapi, natema and yage. Followers often refer to it as 'tea'.

There are several recipes for ayahuasca, although Santo Daime

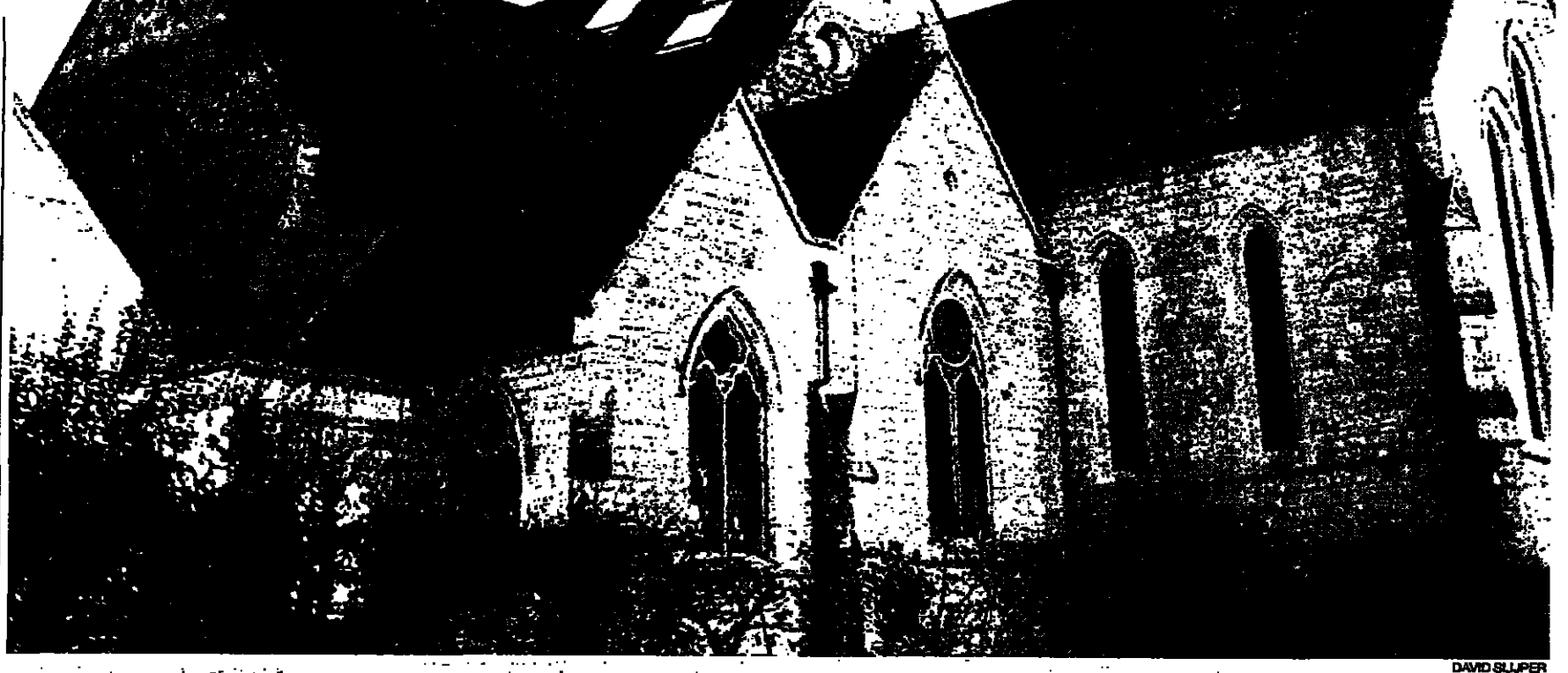
uses only one. Members of the group in north London confirmed that it combines the climbing jagube vine *Banisteriopsis caapi*, which contains the drug harmine, and the leaves of the bush *Psychotria viridis*, known as the 'queen leaves', which has as a constituent the powerful and illegal psychedelic chemical, dimethyltryptamine, or DMT. The mixture is imported from South America and there is some doubt as to whether the DMT survives the journey, though my experiences of taking the drug suggest that it might. Until full chemical analysis is conducted in this country, we cannot be certain of the exact chemical make-up of the ayahuasca used here.

Santo Daime was founded by Raimundo Irineu Serra, or Mestre (Master) Irineu to followers, a black rubber tapper who came across native Indian shamans and their mind-bending drugs when working in Brazil in the 1920s. Serra embraced the shaman's lore and grafted on elements of Catholicism, West African animism and eastern mysticism to produce Santo Daime's hybrid doctrine.

The sect has about 5,000 followers worldwide, with bases in America, Japan, and parts of Europe including France, Germany, Spain, Austria, Italy and Switzerland. There is a sizeable church in Amsterdam.

The main inspiration behind the British branch of Santo Daime is a woman of native American ancestry, Maya (not her real name) came across the sect 10 years ago in Los Angeles. "I heard there was a Brazilian spiritual group in town, and that you had to wear white," she followed her intuition and attended and says the effect of the drug-enhanced ritual was to wake her from a great sleep. "It felt like a tremendous shift had happened for me. I did experience divine love. My awareness of spiritual energies became very heightened."

Maya says that up to 50 people have attended Santo Daime's services in north London and taken the hallucinogenic drug, though it is possible she is understating the



DAVID SLIFER

figure for fear of provoking action from the authorities. The vicar of the north London church where they convene understands that the group is Christian but is unaware of its unconventional form of worship and sacrament.

Members of the sect are told to abstain from sex and alcohol for three days before and after services. Participants dress mainly in white or light colours. They congregate around the altar on which pictures of the sect's *messtres* and the Santo Daime cross with its double horizontal bars and statues of the madonna are arranged.

Services begin with a recitation of Our Father and Hail Mary, after which members queue for the ayahuasca. This is a foul-smelling purple liquid dispensed in small glasses. The drug consumed, followers sing hymns in Portuguese for several hours, punctuated by occasional prayers and meditations. Many of the hymns relate to the Virgin Mary, Jesus and the

master, with a strong emphasis on obedience, patriarchy and Christian virtues. Gradually, the ayahuasca begins to take effect — an effect similar to that induced by LSD or magic mushrooms. Floor and walls shift and change colours.

You feel detached from your psyche; one minute you are effervescent and elated, the next paranoid and uneasy. Ayahuasca is also emetic. Plastic buckets are laid out at services into which followers retch and vomit. It is a bizarre spectacle: after they have 'purged' themselves they leave the room to empty the buckets and then return to their places and carry on singing as though nothing has happened.

For some, the experience of the drug is hard to cope with. At the first of two services I attended, a woman vomited and wept through most of the proceedings. Eventually, she was helped into a sleeping bag that had been laid out especially for such cases beside the main altar.

I took ayahuasca along with followers in order to verify its properties. On the second occasion I was myself a casualty of its potency. A line of type I was reading on a hymn sheet shattered into three, each one a different colour, and then spread out of focus. I began to see such ferocious visions that I was unable to stand, and lay on the floor for what must have been four and a half hours, assaulted by malign manifestations and thoughts.

Members of the sect say that however arduous the experience, the drug is beneficial because it acts as a therapy. The authorities may not be so open-minded. In Germany and Japan, police have analysed samples of the fluid and questioned sect members, though no arrests have yet been made. In Italy, police raided a service and removed ayahuasca for testing. Oddly, the organisers were prosecuted under the public health regulations because of the concoction's

high bacterial content, rather than for distributing illegal substances.

Other countries have been more lenient. In Brazil the anti-drug authorities have decided that ayahuasca has a positive influence when used for religious purposes, and Santo Daime has been given permission to use it as a sacrament. In the Netherlands, surprisingly, use of ayahuasca is not illegal. This means that Santo Daime — and other individuals and groups — can take it openly. The Amsterdam public health authority states that so far no health problems arising from its use have come to light. In Amsterdam, Santo Daime services often feature the use of marijuana as well as ayahuasca.

So what will happen in this country? Maya believes that the sect's ways should be respected, that taking ayahuasca is a legitimate, 'I look at the Daime as a sacrament, a sacred beverage. It feels very natural and quite rewarding.'

Yet in Britain the hallucinogenic DMT is classed as an illegal class A drug. Taken alone, DMT is very powerful, though its impact lasts for less than half an hour. In drug-taking circles it is known as 'the businessman's lunch'. However, harmine — ayahuasca's other active ingredient — inhibits the action of body enzymes which break down DMT, allowing the hallucinogen to be absorbed more readily and over longer periods.

As for myself, the four and a half hours on the floor mercifully came to an end, but the drug's effects lingered until eight the following morning and I suffered flashbacks — short panic attacks — for a couple of weeks thereafter. There was one consolation. At the end of the service I had at least recovered sufficient composure to take part in the serial hugging that is Santo Daime's usual ending.

Dan Atkinson and Larry Elliott on the brave new economic world we're all living in, free from high inflation but also job security and state pensions

Anxious? Insecure? You'll get used to it

Two decades into de-regulation, liberalisation and brainiac globalisation, what do you think of the show so far? Perhaps you're having a ball. Or perhaps not.

For the fortunate elite, the last two decades have been exciting, as they cruised the world, club-class, spreading word of the wonders of the free market. Down below, their fellows in the City and Wall Street are earning sums that fuel lives of almost incomprehensible affluence.

But the chances are that you are not one of the few. You may have been out of work; figures last year showed that unemployment is a mainstream social condition, with at least one spell of joblessness experienced by one in five men and one in eight women. You may have lost your house: one million did between 1990 and 1996. Or been made bankrupt: 22,000 a year are declared insolvent. You may have escaped these misfortunes, yet remain anxious and insecure. At work, you are spot-tested for drugs and alcohol, expected to work ever-

lengthening hours, attend team-building weekends, allow psychometric testing to weed out 'unhelpful attitudes' and cooperate with management consultants to eliminate your job. You are informed that the 'job for life' culture is dead.

Even off duty, you are videotaped by closed-circuit TV, your house is now liable to bugging by the police without warrant, your child-rearing is scrutinised by public employees and you are bombarded with governmental prohibitions on eating, drinking, smoking and even hand-washing.

De-regulation applies to money, but not to you. As business and capital shrug off the remaining constraints of the post-war years, so the individual is confined to an ever-narrowing corridor of acceptable behaviour, at work, home, even in bed. In contrast to previous conformist social systems — like Scandinavian social democracy — there is no trade-off between shrinking personal liberty and economic security. The constraints on the person exist beside a financial system which believes that it is neither pos-

sible nor desirable to offer economic security and that those who fail to be competitive must be downsized.

Insecurity comes in a double-dose for the worker who now fears not only the P45 and UB40 but the knock on the door from the child-welfare inspector or 'homework police'.

This is the New Command Economy, in which capital is free and working people have been nationalised. Unemployment is a fact of life, huge inequalities have opened up in income and wealth, the private sector does as it likes and the public does as it is told. The very instability left by the rampaging wolf of global capital makes necessary much more stringent social controls; as jobs move out of the inner-city neighbourhood so the closed-circuit cameras and 'zero-tolerance' police move in. And the new culture of control is a make-work scheme for politicians and administrators: having abandoned any pretence at managing the economy, they channel their energies into managing the citizenry.



ANDRZEJ KLIMOWSKI

But the new economic system can work in no other way. Money secures the world for the highest return and, in doing so, it generates colossal instability. The role of governments is to maintain order in their territories (securing the operating bases of multinational business) and pacify their populations into skilled, docile workforces with the correct attitudes in the hope that international finance may offer jobs through inward investment.

Under the lash from capital seeking higher returns, big business abandons all pretence at patriotism and social responsibility and shops internationally for the most 'competitive and flexible' workers. The net effect is that the entire burden of risk, rather than being shared by

people and business, is loaded on to the backs of people. At the strategic level, this means giving absolute priority to low inflation, allowing the burden of 'adjustment' to fall exclusively on the workforce.

For the ordinary person this means that whenever the economy hits one of its periodic shocks, the holders of wealth share none of the pain (because inflation is held down and the exchange rate held steady) and a sharp rise in unemployment is the only way of adjusting the economy.

It is in the workplace that the insecurity generated by this unfair burden of risk is felt most keenly. The assault on the traditional career ladder is central to the destruction of job security, as is the insidious process whereby employ-

ees and whole departments are cut adrift into independent business units and ordered to tender for their own work against external contractors. Britons work the longest hours in Europe and are prone to presentism — staying late at work to avoid accusations of laziness.

But this shifting of the burden of insecurity also manifests itself in an entire new culture of moral hazard, in which the operations of the financial sector are effectively underwritten by the sacrifices of ordinary people.

The most blatant examples of this have been seen in the Mexican and Far Eastern crises, in which the International Monetary Fund has bailed out the speculators and bankers and imposed austerity pro-

grammes. But it happened here, too. In March 1994, City traders marked down the price of British government paper in response to official data showing an upward jump in average earnings in the UK. The traders' action put pressure on the government to raise interest rates to make its paper more attractive. But that rise in average earnings was almost entirely due to the enormous bonuses paid in 1993-94 to City traders. They punished us for their good fortune.

Your taxes are subsidising finance and big business, too. Staggering sums are paid in bribes to multinational companies to attract them or to keep them in Britain. Ford trousered £71 million to modernise the Jaguar plant at Coventry and about £15 million to renovate Halewood on Merseyside. And not all these bribes are published because they are considered commercially confidential.

Meanwhile, the citizen learns that his own safety net has become unaffordable and that radical restructuring — cuts — will follow. Waiting to offer an alternative is the life-assurance industry, which managed in a few years from 1986 to mis-sell £4 billion-worth of pensions to those opting out of employer schemes. Those who will bear the brunt of compensating the victims will be their fellow-investors.

For the ordinary person, the lesson is clear: the only means of escape from insecurity is to remain ahead of the curve as assets are looted, and let your fellows go hang. The winners are those who have scrambled to the top of a privatised utility, who call the shots as bond traders or speculators. The rest are losers, the compliant, cowed workforces of the New Command Economy.

The Age Of Insecurity, by Larry Elliott and Dan Atkinson, is published by Verso, £17.



The author

books

We've almost forgotten William Hazlitt. **Tom Paulin** sets out to recover a great artist-critic

Liberty's brightest star

William Hazlitt appears to have almost entirely dropped out of the literary canon. Though Hazlitt is an important — and I'd say great — Romantic writer, he is hardly studied in schools and universities. All of his work, with the exception of *The Spirit of the Age*, is out of print, and there are only two paperback selections from the collected works, whose 20 volumes total about 8,000 pages. He is a master of the essay form, the first major art critic in English, the first major drama critic, a devoted admirer of popular culture — boxing, racket-playing — as well as one of the outstanding political and literary journalists and polemicists the nation has ever produced. Like William Cobbett, who "naturally butts at all obstacles, as unicorns are attracted to oak trees", his prose affirms English liberty in the sivey pluck and stretch of every sentence he wrote. But he stands not just for English liberty, as I discovered in the course of my researches into his background.

Initially, though, I had to cope with the enormous neglect which this Shakespearean prose writer has suffered. Working through the collected edition, I began reading Hazlitt's *Life of Napoleon*, but halfway through the first of its three volumes I found that the pages needed cutting. His biography of Napoleon had stood with the other volumes on the open shelves of the Bodleian library for more than 60 years and no one had read through them. At least Hazlitt is still on the open shelves, I reflected; Keats, another great neglected author, isn't.

I see Hazlitt as an epic writer — the first and best Critic as Artist — and I've tried to honour the energy and momentum of his work, its sensuous intellect, by writing a study in 12 chapters. Its subject is the tactile subtlety of his prose style, and my aim is to treat him as a leading Romantic writer, who is at least as important as Wordsworth and Keats, and who is a more important critic than Coleridge.

I can't imagine anyone in the future writing about the intricacies and beauties of F.R. Leavis's prose style, but Hazlitt's prose is unique in its texture, boldness and dramatic empathy. His intellect is plenary — his last book, *An Essay on the Principles of Human Action*, is an original work of philosophy, and I see him as

a kind of founding, in a way uprooted, figure, like Virgil Aeneas. I've attempted to honour him by trying to shadow epic form, and to write a critical book which pushes at the barriers of criticism. I've never believed that the critical and the creative imaginations are separate — rather, as Oscar Wilde pointed out long ago, "Criticism is really creative in the highest sense of the word. Criticism is, in fact, both creative and independent."

As I began writing my study, I also started to search what traces Hazlitt had left other than books of his 52 years on this earth. He was born in Maidstone on 10 April 1778 and died in a Soho rooming-house in Frith Street on 18 September 1830. The rooming-house is now known as Hazlitt's Hotel and writers are welcomed there. I've stayed in it several times, most recently in the small back room on the third floor where Hazlitt died. But it's in Maidstone that you can glimpse Hazlitt and his family.

At the turn of the stairs in an Elizabethan manor house near the centre of Maidstone, there is a darkened, damaged self-portrait of the young William Hazlitt. To paint it the apprentice artist used a brown bituminous pigment which produced an instant Rembrandt-like effect and helped create the chiaroscuro he was seeking. Unfortunately, this type of paint never dries completely, though eventually it produces a broken surface that looks like crocodile skin. In his cream, almost clamping heckcloth, the young Hazlitt stares at us with dark eyes, a little patch of sunlight on his right forehead. The cracks make him look strangely damaged — there is something raw, unformed, even dangerous in his direct, but somehow vulnerably shrouded gaze. This is Hazlitt as he described himself at the age of 19 — "dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the way-side," and perhaps he was thinking of this early portrait when he went on to say that his soul has remained "in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unexpressed".

Hazlitt's mother, Grace Loftus, was from a dissenting family in Cambridgeshire, and his father, the Rev. William Hazlitt, was an Irish Unitarian from Co. Tipperary who was minister in Maidstone from 1770 to 1780, when the controversy caused by his vocal support for the American rebels forced him to return with the family to Ireland. Though Hazlitt often beats the drum of his Britishness deliber-

ately, we must recognise that he was half Irish and that his descendants described the family as Irish. The critic's grandson, William Carew Hazlitt, says that the Rev. Hazlitt was "an Irishman, and my grandfather after him".

In her journal, Hazlitt's sister Margaret suggests that had the family remained in Co. Cork, where her father was a minister at Bandon from 1780-83, he would not have survived the United Irish rebellion, which began on 23 May 1798. Hazlitt, in one of his most famous essays, "My First Acquaintance with Poets", refers to 1798 as "the year of Demogorgon" — borrowing an image from Milton to express the horror of that year when 30,000 republicans and loyalists lost their lives in battles in the north and south of Ireland.

Hazlitt's father is described by his daughter as a fearless radical who inspired his children with a passionate political commitment. With the ending of the American War of Independence, the family emigrated to the new United States where they stayed for four years. The Hazlitt family's bold honesty and boisterous plain-speaking are characteristic of what we might call the *Whig mentalities* for the Hazlitts were what were known as "Real Whites". Intellectually, they were the descendants of the Commonwealthmen who briefly made England a republic in the middle of the 17th century. They are in a line of descent from Milton, Harrington and Algernon Sidney, and they carry proudly the scars of the battles those men fought.

Hazlitt gives an account of painting his father's portrait in his essay "On the Pleasure of Painting". Hazlitt says he finished his father's portrait on the same day that the news of the Battle of Austerlitz reached Wem, the remote Shropshire village the Hazlitts moved to on their return from the United States. "I walked out in the afternoon, and, as I returned, saw the evening star set over a poor man's cottage with other thoughts and feelings than I shall ever have again." In a moment of victory, Hazlitt's hero Napoleon completes this elegy for his outspoken father — an elegy that also celebrates and mourns his own youthful idealism, as well as catching the closeness father and son shared while the portrait was in progress in the chapel at Wem.

The old, benevolent, bespectacled, craggy, doubly pocked face looks down at a book he seems almost to thrust towards us. Together, the portrait and Hazlitt's elegiac essay help to place the father who began life as "a poor Irish lad", the child of a Calvinist, northern Irish family that had moved to Co. Tipperary. Abandoning their form of Presbyterianism, he studied under Adam

Smith at the University of Glasgow and became a veteran in the Unitarian cause. A forthright, argumentative, utterly unworldly man, his life was "comparatively a dream". His uncompromising nature and unshakeable principles meant that he didn't prosper in the

church — in many ways, he appears to have been a typical Irish Protestant.

That his son, the critic, is so tenuously lodged in the cultural memory at the present moment is sad. Few readers, and still fewer places, claim him. The house beside the disused chapel in Wem where his father preached has a commemorative plaque on the

wall, and so has the Maidstone chapel (Unitarians still worship there). The rooming-house in Frith Street, Soho, where he died, has a blue plaque. In St Anne's churchyard nearby there is a memorial tablet to mark where he is buried. In Winterslow, the Hampshire village he kept returning to, there isn't a trace of his presence. And in Bandon, Co. Cork, where his father preached, there is no commemorative plaque on the building that used to be the Unitarian chapel there.

Perhaps it's a pious mistake to try to make memories inhere in places and objects. Yet over the years I've been studying Hazlitt, the wish for some glimpse of the driven, fallible human being who created such ecstatically definite prose has prompted me to consider how piety has to be part of the inspiration behind the attempt to write about a neglected author. During this time, the moments when I've come closest to an idea of his presence were when I looked at that self-portrait and at the portrait of his father reading. To see the Rev. William Hazlitt's portrait I had to go into a dark storeroom in the Maidstone Museum, where I also saw Hazlitt's death mask and a copy of the mask, both wrapped in tissue paper.

I also looked through a box of his brother John's miniatures — accomplished, rather slick works the size of large brooches: "Mrs John Hazlitt", "Lady with a Muff", "James Boswell after Joshua Reynolds". John Hazlitt's daughter Harriet mourning over a dead starling. Then I found a miniature of Margaret Hazlitt, the sister who stayed at home to look after their parents. John's full-length portrait of Margaret hangs near Hazlitt's self-portrait in the main part of the museum, so I recognised her thoughtful, sensitive, strong-willed, rather Irish face. This miniature had more expression, more feeling, than the other rather slick ones in the box. Maybe that was why I looked at it for a bit longer and then on a sudden impulse turned it over and found a bunch of plaited hair behind the glass back. Auburn, fresh, as though it had been newly cut, her hair looked just as it did in the portrait. For a moment, I felt in touch with the dead.

Tom Paulin's *The Day-Star of Liberty: William Hazlitt's Radical Style* will be published next week (Faber, £22.50).



William Hazlitt... his prose affirms liberty in the pluck and stretch of every sentence

John Diamond got cancer. Giles Foden considers a life all too familiar with dread

When cancer grows ambitious

C: Because Cowards Get Cancer Too by John Diamond
240pp, Vermilion, £9.99

As any devotee of astrology will know, the word cancer comes from the Latin for crab: the malignant tumour so called, according to Galen, because the swollen veins around it bear a resemblance to a crab's limbs. It is a peculiarly powerful etymology, not only because it projects the creeping spread of the disease, but also because the very limit of that spread is so tied up with time, with blind hope on the one hand and awful anticipation on the other. The fact is, whatever sign the sufferer is under, this is a horoscope which may turn out bad, because of the tendency of cancers to return after removal. It is a dreadful, dread-full situation, like waiting for pardon

while on sentence of death.

Dread is a feeling powerfully conveyed in C. John Diamond's book about suffering and (for the time being) surviving the disease: in his opening page, he himself talks of how prognosis "can only ever be equivocal and even the best augured cancers can turn into fatal ones". It is that equivocation, the instability of the augur, which makes it all so frightening: for where can the sentence end when cancer is a verb as well as a noun? De Quincey knew this, writing of things that "silently cancer their way onwards", and so does Diamond, who takes us from initial, seemingly undangerous possibilities (a lump in his neck) to remission and re-entry, like a winged satellite, into relatively normal, but always conditional life.

Actual diagnosis at age 44 is preceded by tests during which, as he acknowledges, any consideration he gave cancer was "at a sort of existential arms' length". This

head-in-sand attitude to medical matters is as natural to all of us as its antithesis — the feeling that there is something there, deep inside, deeply wrong. That kind of metaphysical hypochondria may be nothing more than the modern equivalent of original sin, which ancient burden the publishing industry happily exploits in the current vogue for illness narrative. Books in the genre tend to crave explanation — "why me?" the sick narrator will ask — and science is often brought in aid to furnish religious answers in disguise.

What used, in this context, to be considered as a curse, as bad blood, is now presented as a genetic predisposition. It is in this vein that Diamond worries about the future of his two young children, given that there is cancer in the family of his wife, fellow journalist Nigella Lawson. Both her mother and her sister died of the disease, and that is the least of the things which make her heroine

of this book as much as Diamond is the hero, right from her initial fortitude on March 27, 1997 onwards: "That night I was watching EastEnders and waiting for Nigella to come and join me. Ten minutes in she sat down next to me, put a cup of tea down, took my hands in hers and said: 'Mr Mady phoned. He says they've found some cancerous cells.'"

As well as presenting such moving scenes, Diamond explores the pathology of cancer. For instance how, rather than just dividing and re-dividing like an ordinary cell, the cancerous cell "wants to go places, do things that its parents never had the chance to do". In spite of its boisterous, non-clinical tone (doctors don't like to think in metaphors, patients can hardly do otherwise), that is a telling image. So is a neighbouring one about the cancer cell believing itself to be immortal.

There are many other terrific bits of writing here — check out his

description of a blood-test at a "pay-as-you-bleed medical knocking shop staffed by cool, leggy nurses-receptionists in Calvin Klein lab coats" — and it is these that are the most important thing about C, more important than its authentic generation of pity or inadvertent setting down of a *cadre marm* for other sufferers.

Although they are interesting snippets of a life, Diamond's contextualising chunks of biography — East End Jewish background, early work as a teacher, fluked a job in journalism, became a top columnist and broadcaster — are secondary too. Apart from its imaginative, even poetic use of language — up till now I'd thought of Diamond as just another one of Fleet Street's likely lads — the real strengths of the book lie in the pictures it presents of how he and others cope with the disease. Those who have been through similar experiences will recognise how relatives (in this case Diamond's

parents) sometimes go into denial more than sufferers: "In return for their self-protectingly minimising the illness, I would maximise it, scaring them even more than was necessary. Conversations between us became bizarre with them talking about what sounded like a nasty cold and me insisting that death was hours away."

Death wasn't, but some very nasty treatments, surgical procedures and side-effects were, including irradiation of the neck and face, which involved having a Perspex mask made, to make sure the radiation gun hit the right spots. Diamond relates how this turned out to be "a cumbersome see-through version of the black latex hoods they sell in the more recherche sex shops with that same gaping mouth hole and sightless eyes". All it needed, he adds with typical grim humour, "was a couple of hooks to take a chain or two".

The disease to which Diamond is enchained is far more insidious than his "porno-mask". As loss of weight and loss of taste increased, he and Nigella made a horrible discovery: a lump on his tongue. Now he had "not just cancer of the neck and head but cancer of the tongue". This meant invasive surgery: as Diamond

tells it, the surgeon would cut "a wedge of my forearm out and sew it into the gap where part of my tongue had been removed. He'd then take some skin from my thigh to cover the hole in my forearm."

These and other gothic horrors are indeed "chilling". That is the word Diamond's wife uses when, woody after his operation, he holds up a note in front of his livid mouth, with a question written on it: "Can you see a tongue in there?" Then comes his heroic post-operative struggle to talk reasonably properly again, to learn how to manipulate "the muscular stanchion" from which "the tumorous golf ball had been snatched".

That last is a heroic phrase too. Although John Diamond may, as he concedes, still have talking problems and pain problems and mucus problems, at the moment his biopsies are clear. Whatever else it has done (his attitude to the redeeming aspects of his illness is properly cautious), his bleak experience has shone light on a very fine prose writer. I hope we don't lose him.

If you would like to order a copy of C: *Because Cowards Get Cancer Too* at the discount price of £9.99 (p&p free), call the Guardian Culture Shop on 0500 600102.

INTIMATE
DEATH
MARIE DE HENNEZEL

Inspirational ... written with compassion and sympathy, the book eschews denial, transforming the unpalatable into something humane.

Independent

A brave book ... turns a previously taboo subject into intensely emotional intimacy as much concerned with the enriching moments of joy and sweetness as facing the suffering and solitude.

Daily Mail

صوتنا من الامم

arts



Casanova: the celibate years



The most famous lover of all time spent his twilight years as a librarian in a little-known Czech town. **Kate Connolly** reports

Macaroni, crayfish, and duck in marmalade sauce was on the menu at a strange little dinner in a dilapidated castle in northern Bohemia on Thursday night. The guests were as weirdly diverse as the bill of fare: a Dutch Protestant minister, an aid worker, a taxi driver, a historian and an architect.

But they are united in one thing. They are Casanovists, aficionados of the world's most famous lover, and they had come together from all over Europe to pay tribute to Giacomo Girolamo Casanova, Chevalier de Seingalt, by indulging in his favourite comfort foods on the 200th anniversary of his death.

"We drank his favourite Madeira and finished off the

evening with mugs of the frothy hot chocolate and pistachios that Casanova so enjoyed," says the Rev Marco Leeftang, who had come from Utrecht. "I searched all over the place for the right period-style marmalade," he says. He found just what he was looking for in Prague's Tesco, and produces a sample jar from his briefcase to show me.

Duchcov, also known as Dux, is not the kind of place you'd associate with the Casanova of lore. It sits in the middle of one of the most polluted areas in Europe and bears the scars and slag-heaps of years of brown coal mining. Even Casanova was a reluctant guest when he arrived at the castle gates in 1785. He was 60 years old and, having left his native Venice as a child, had already traversed

Europe by horse and coach, lurching from palace to pawnbroker's and back. His swashbuckling career of duels, imprisonments, daring escapes, near beheadings, debauchery and several bouts of syphilis was coming to an end.

Broke, almost impotent and acutely aware of his age, Casanova took up the offer of his Freemason friend, Count Waldstein, to become Duchcov's librarian. Here begins the most unknown and perhaps most fascinating period of Casanova's life: the time when the magic stopped and old age set in.

"The Bohemian part of his life has been much-neglected," says Professor Josef Polisensky, author of *Casanova: His World*, who has been studying the famous lover since he was 10. "For the first time, he had a regular income and was able to write, and if it wasn't for that we might never have known about Casanova at all." Holed up in the basement library with 12,000 books, Casanova began to take stock of his life, and spent 13 hours a day penning the 12-volume *Histoire De Ma Vie*, stopping only to take hot-chocolate breaks.

The professor, near blind himself now, is at pains to show that Casanova's reputation as a lover has been grossly exaggerated while his greatness as a diarist and philosopher has been downplayed. "He conquered 132 times, but he was sexually capable for 35 years, which, according to my calculation, is only three or four affairs a year. To me that doesn't add up to being a great lover."

The insular Bohemians considered this "African-skinned" foreigner with a "wild gaze" to be a curiosity, and rumours of his racy, prurient past abounded. At five feet nine inches he was tall for the times, too. (His blankets were made extra-large, but he could never sleep lying down in his short bed and had to be propped up on three plump pillows.)

Even as an old man, he must have cut quite a dashing figure, particularly since he enjoyed dressing up as a woman. There was a strong strain of transsexuality about him — he liked his lovers to dress as men, and he bemoaned that he would always be "devoid of a uterus". But Duchcov society made fun of his silk waistcoats and stockings, of the brass buckles and the white plume he wore to town balls and his old-fashioned dance-steps. So much so that he once wrote a public letter rebuking the townsfolk and copied it to his host, the Count. "You ruff-raff, you are all Jacobins. You wrong the Count and the Count wrongs me by not punishing you."

Despite Casanova's track record as a lover, a fear that his "steed would flinch from beginning another race" began to eat at him. Perhaps that's why he took a vow of celibacy on entering Duchcov, having felt for the preceding 22 years (since his rejection by the celebrated prostitute La Chappillon in

London, after which he almost threw himself in the Thames) that his "potency had been diminishing little by little" and that "try as I might, women no longer tended to fall in love with me".

Nevertheless, there are whispers that he wavered from the path of righteousness. Two years before his death he was accused of impregnating the gatekeeper's daughter, Dorothea Kleer. "At first, although he knew it wasn't true, he seemed quite proud that at 71 people thought he was still capable of such a thing," said Petr Benes, a guide at the castle.

Out of vanity, he let the rumours roll until he realised he was becoming a laughing stock. At which point he marched Kleer to St Barbara's chapel and said that if she could prove he was the father, he would marry her. She then confessed that the real father was her painter boyfriend, Franz. Dorothea and Franz were married soon afterwards.

Rather than more amorous trysts, Casanova found himself embroiled in a mundane battle of wits with his servant, Feldkirchner, whose insolence and constant jibes wore him down. Unlike in his previous existence, when he would high-tail it out of town as soon as a problem loomed, there was no escape from his provincial prison. Instead he vented his anger through 19 vitriolic letters, written in French in his neat, right-leaning hand. Though they remained undelivered, the letters denounce the servant as a "villain" and "a scoundrel".

"He conquered 132 times, which by calculation is only three or four affairs a year"

He wanted to show respect to "a man who, though not a gentleman by birth, became one through the study of the sciences and literature".

At other times Casanova complained that the cook had spoiled the polenta, that the stable boy had given him a bad coach or that the Count's hunting dogs howled through the night and prevented him from sleeping. Writing was the only thing that cheered him. He would retreat to his room and remember the women he had loved and his adventures with them. He recalled his adoration for Adriana Foscari in Corfu in 1745, and how he swallowed phials of her hair ground to a powder, such was the strength of his passion. He remembered how on his entrance to Vienna in 1747, Empress Maria Theresa set up a Chastity Commission to curb sexual licentiousness.

Casanova revelled in the celebration of his copulations in elegant salons, in gondolas, in carriages, on couches and in

cow-sheds. He even gloried in his lovers' body odour and post-coital farts. What is most remarkable is the understanding he had for his women, both in bed and out. Contrary to popular belief, most of the time he didn't just dine and dash.

"The older I grew, the more what attracted me to women was intelligence," he wrote in Volume 11. He told his last "pen lover", the 22-year-old Cecile von Roggen-dorf, that he believed true love to be unrelated to carnal pleasure.

His empathy with women even stretched so far as a knowledge of pre-menstrual tension, unheard of in the 18th century. "When their uterus is active, women are agitated, irritable, and deserving of pity," he wrote.

But the most important woman in his life, and the one he had constantly tried to impress, always remained inaccessible. His beautiful mother Zanetta Casanova — an actress in the days when they often performed in bed as well as on stage — abandoned him at birth.

When she did see him she would humiliate him, telling him that the colour of his wig didn't match his eyebrows. In Duchcov he returned again and again to his painful days as a latch-key kid, remembering her total lack of interest and the joy he felt when he made her laugh. He learned the art of conversation just to win her attention. He even adopted a slavish penchant for her passion — crayfish — a craving she developed in the last few days of her pregnancy with him.

There are obvious Oedipal undertones in his obsession and in the quiet jealousy he expresses towards her lovers, including the future George II, who probably fathered Casanova's half-brother, Francesco.

A Czech psychologist has suggested that this deep longing for acceptance had a huge influence on his attitude towards women in adult life. Indeed, in the introduction to his memoirs, Casanova confesses: "Feeling that I was born for the sex opposite to mine, I have always loved it and done all that I could to make myself loved by it."

His later years were not all misery. He entertained Goethe, Schiller and the young Beethoven. He also drew up a blueprint for a soap factory, and devised a "grammatical" lottery for the city of Prague that aimed to teach the player French. He anticipated science fiction with his utopian adventure tale, *Icosameron*, and wrote treatises on the Enlightenment, atheism and the education of young women. And when Mozart was in Prague composing Don Giovanni, Casanova assisted Lorenzo da Ponte by scribbling a few lines for the libretto inspired by his own amorous experiences.

And, unable to contain his wanderlust, he often travelled overnight in his dressing-gown from Duchcov to Leipzig, Prague and Dresden, taking his huge pil-

lows, two pineapples and two pheasants with him. At the border between Bohemia and Saxony he was once strip-searched by customs officials looking for a painting of the Madonna by Correggio, stolen from Dresden's art gallery.

An ambitious social climber, Casanova had a lifelong obsession with being accepted by the aristocracy. In his last days he lived out that fantasy on the northern Bohemian scene, where he was the star player. He made constant trips to the spa-town of Teplice, 10 miles from Duchcov, which attracted high society mainly from the north of Europe. He spent much of the spring and summer months visiting his friend Elise von der Recke. Today Teplice is a rather sad roadside stop on the infamous highway E55, which attracts sex tourists lured by cheap Czech prostitutes.

Casanovists are in constant dispute over the cause of his death. Some say it was throat cancer; others cancer of the prostate, while others suggest it was the effects of venereal disease. His last letter was to Elise von der Recke, who sent him soup, red wine and a Bible just before he died. "If I recover I'll be all yours," he wrote. "But what would you do with me?" He died in a rose-patterned chair, which is still on display at the castle, with his nephew at his side.

Since the late 1980s, the Italians, who sent him into exile at the age of 57, have requested the return of Casanova's remains to

Book lover... Casanova in the library by Czech cartoonist Frantisek Kratochvíl, above. Casanova worked in Duchcov castle, top left, for Count Waldstein

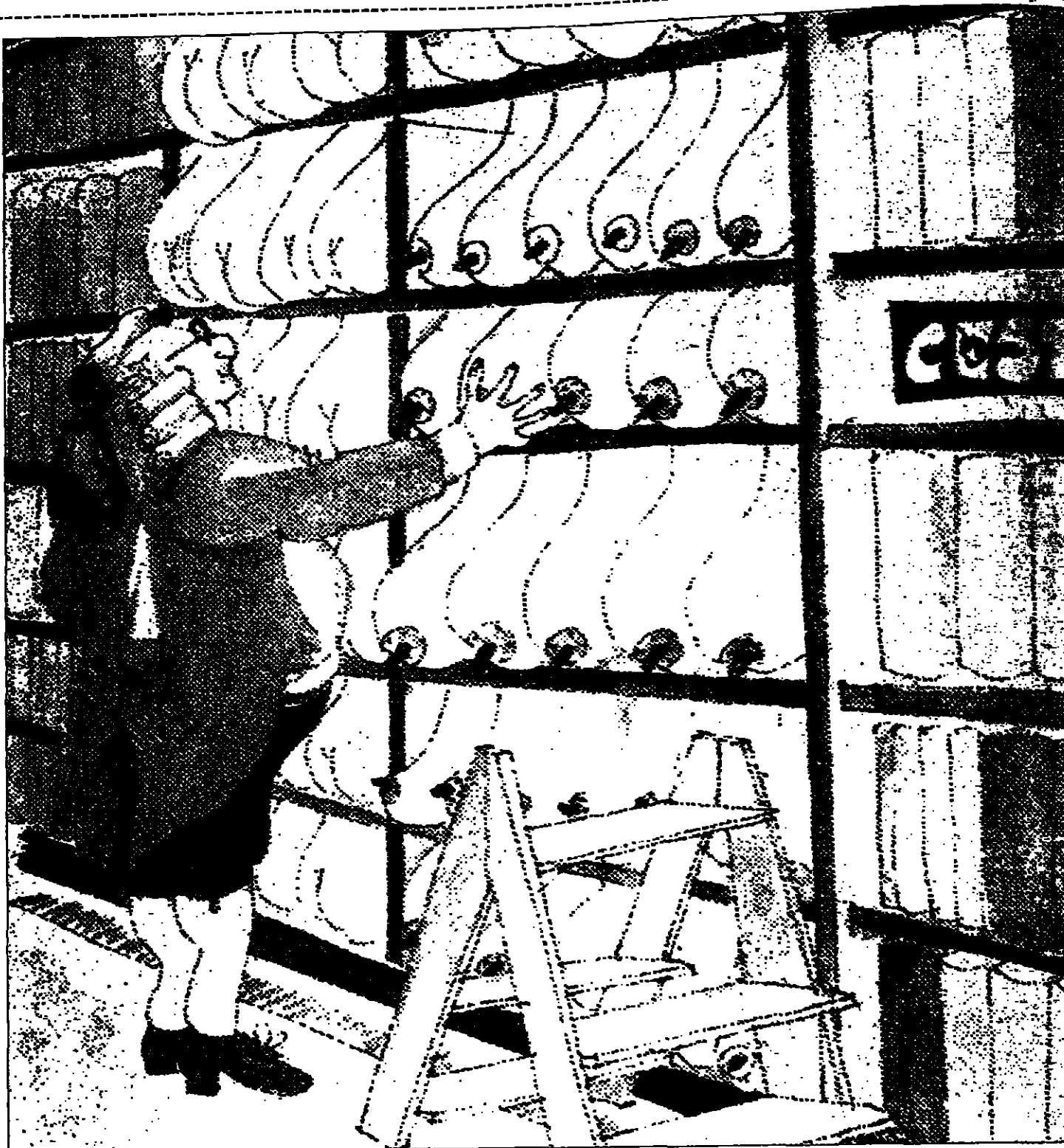
PHOTO: JULIA DENESHA

Venice. But just as Casanova enjoyed sowing seeds of confusion in life, so it is in death. In the eighties, the Rev Leeftang hired a clairvoyant to locate his hero's grave in the castle grounds. "The clairvoyant contacted Casanova, who said: 'My bones aren't important but there's a leather case full of documents buried at my side.'"

The communist authorities gave permission to dig a specific depth and width for a set amount of time at a site next to a Soviet army monument. "The mayor stood there with his ruler and stop-watch," says Rev Leeftang. "But all we found was the tooth of a cow and Mlle de la clauvoyant burst into tears. Nevertheless, Casanova would have appreciated the spectacle."

He would also no doubt have laughed long and hard on Thursday night. For, before the dinner, the Bishop of Bohemia said Mass in his memory at the castle's derelict chapel — the surest sign yet that the man who was thrown out of a seminary as a teenager for deflowering two nuns is in line for absolution as well as rehabilitation.

"We thought the bishop would reel back in horror when we asked him," says the Rev Leeftang. "But I suspect that maybe he's just never got round to reading the memoirs."



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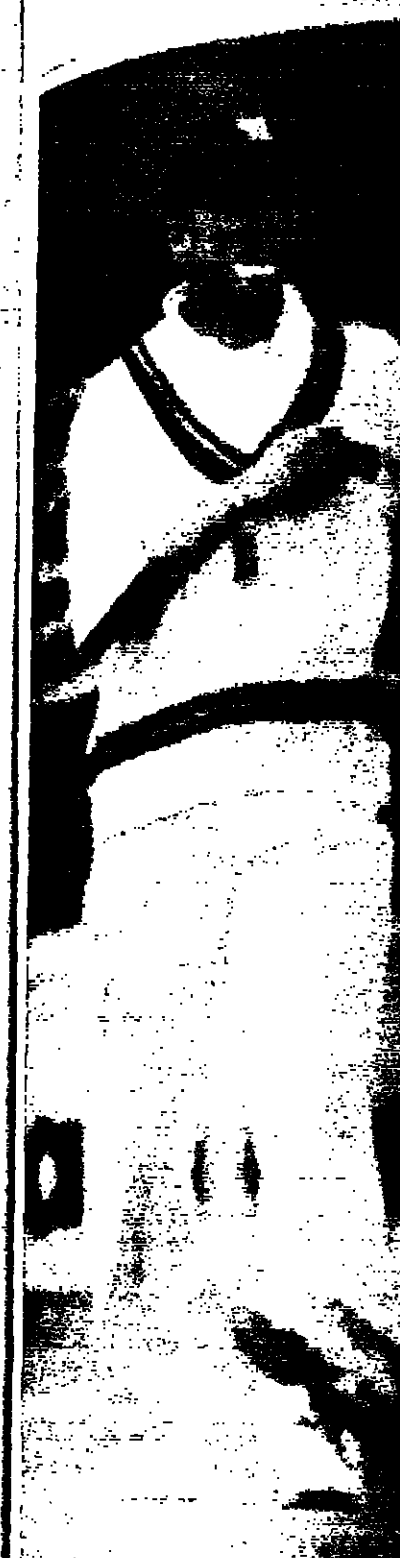
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World Cup: trouble and tales of the training camp

Fag in mouth, blonde to hand, pints on table – no trouble except that it was Sheringham in Portugal at 6.45am

David Lacey



AS AN example of how an average English working man – early 30s, single and with a bit of spare cash to throw around – spends his leisure hours the picture was normal to the point of banality. Fag in mouth, blonde to hand, pints of beer on the table, the scene could have been shot in any pub or club up and down the country.

Except that in this case the man was Teddy Sheringham, who on Monday week is due to play a fundamental role as England begin their quest for the 1998 World Cup, the country was Portugal and the local time was 6.45am. And since the picture appeared five days after Glenn Hoddle had dropped Paul Gascoigne from his squad, believing the player was not sufficiently fit to meet the athletic demands of the tournament will make, questions about Sheringham's fitness for the task are bound to be asked.

Gascoigne, remember, was left out after providing a photo opportunity while eating a late-night kebab in Soho with some of his mates. The pro-

Gazza lobby might want to know how lying to the Algarve with friends by private jet, checking into a hotel under a false name and drinking until all hours compares. Certainly it seems an odd response to Hoddle's insistence that during their three-day break his players would still be on England duty: "I've told them... go out and have a nice meal with your wife, whatever, but you're on England duty."

In Sheringham's case it all comes down to Hoddle's definition of "whatever". Two years ago, as England prepared for their opening match in the 1996 European Championship, the player was

snapped having a bottle of tequila poured down his throat in a Hong Kong club at the end of the team's Far East tour. On that occasion Hoddle's predecessor, Terry Venables, dismissed the incident almost out of hand. By the time England had reached the Euro 96 semi-finals Sheringham's session in the dentist's chair had been largely forgotten. He had played exceptionally well and his partnership with Alan Shearer was promising to bring the country its first major international honour since 1968.

Germany and a penalty shoot-out put a stop to that but Sheringham's reputation as a thinking footballer, the professional's professional, was, if anything, enhanced by his performances under Hoddle in the World Cup qualifiers.

Since the New Year, however, Sheringham's form has declined to the extent that critics are wondering if it is only a matter of time before Hoddle replaces him in the England attack with Michael Owen, who is full of running and 14 years younger. Whether or not that happens, it was a bad moment for Sheringham to be caught clubbing at breakfast time.

And bad timing is what this is about: that, along with naivety, insensitivity and an en-

during inability to appreciate that on the eve of a major tournament every twitch that is slightly out of place will be emblazoned across the pages of the popular newspapers. Imagery is everything when England, with just one World Cup success in nearly half a century and that at Wembley, are about to set off for another tournament trying to convince both the public and themselves that they are capable of winning it.

With two reformed alcoholics, Tony Adams and Paul Merson, in the party the apparent inability of other players to relax without a glass to hand creates the impression of a works outing when in fact

this is probably the most thoroughly prepared England squad yet. The stock response to this kind of story is that the matter "has been blown up out of all proportion". But out of all proportion to what? To the sums England's players have been earning through commercial spin-offs, to the £40,000 each will receive even if the team fail to make the second phase, to the £130,000 that Gascoigne is believed to have been paid for his exclusive, though hardly earth-shattering, revelation that he was drunk last Saturday night?

Already the business side of England's World Cup qualification is looking distinctly tacky, with the players and the Football Association in dispute over future sponsorship packages.

If Hoddle's players do well in France their marketability will continue to thrive and should they emulate Bobby Robson's team of Italia 90 by reaching the semi-finals, the nation will again be held in thrall. For the moment, however, it is difficult to forget the song the pirates sang in Treasure Island: "... drink and the devil had done for the rest, yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!"



Concentration campers... the England coach Glenn Hoddle tells his squad of 22 what he expects before their last training session at La Manga in Spain. PHOTOGRAPH: SHAUN BOTTLEWELL

Thompson signs in at the Villa

Ian Rose

JOHN GREGORY yesterday completed his first signing as Aston Villa manager with a £4.5 million deal to take the midfielder Alan Thompson from Bolton.

Ulsterman will agree to stay, the omens are not good. At the precise moment O'Neill was telling Sir Rodney Walker, the chairman of Leicester's pit arm, that he required more time, the Everton board were assembling at Goodison Park, and the question of Howard Kendall's continued employment as manager was the first item on the agenda.

"He is the player I wanted more than anybody since I took over here, and I am delighted to have signed some body of his quality," said Gregory. "He's got all the ingredients I look for."

The 24-year-old, who had also interested Leeds, Leicester, Celtic and Everton, made his league debut for Newcastle, his home-town club, and played 16 games before moving to Bolton in 1993.

It is understood that the Magpies negotiated a sell-on clause with the Lancashire club and stand to pocket a significant amount of the transfer fee.

Liverpool have completed the £2 million signing of Sean Dundee from Karlsruhe, where he scored three goals last season as the team were relegated. The South Africa-born striker, 25, passed a medical last week and yesterday he received international clearance from Germany.

Martin O'Neill took another step towards the door at Fulbert Street yesterday, asking for a further 24 hours to consider his future. The Leicester City manager was, in essence, confirming that he is on the verge of resigning the post only 30 months after he succeeded Mark McGhee.

The 46-year-old O'Neill will announce his decision at about 3pm today. Although the Leicester hierarchy remains optimistic that the

legless, pranks in training camp can help to bond a group of individuals into a team of unquenchable spirit. England's players were vilified after their drunken antics in the dentist's chair in Hong Kong, their "training camp" before Euro 96. But the alcohol turned out to have less effect on their bodies than the criticism had on their spirit and determination, forging a healthy "them against us" appetite to succeed.

On the last half a mile into Wembley, it became a superstitious ritual to sing along to the Lightning Seeds' Three Lions song. Once, when there was a problem with the tape, the players waited until the driver fixed it and set in the Wembley car-park singing along at the tops of their voices.

Naturally there is a thin line between Brian Clough's "let the lads have a few beers" approach and going completely bananas. Four Colombian players, Carlos Valderrama, Adolfo Valencia, Faustino Asprilla and Ivan Rene Valencia, went well over that line in 1994, according to the head of the Colombian FA, Juan Jose Bellini, who accused them of skipping camp regularly to get drunk. He swore they would never wear the yellow shirts again. In fact all four returned, and all but Valencia will probably play against England. Bellini? He is in jail on drug-trafficking-related offences.

Some of the harmless, even

Lock up your players and hope

Roy Collins on the pressures and pleasures of training camps

LOCK away a group of fit young men for weeks at a time, be it in a public school, Colditz or a World Cup training camp, and before you can say Harry Houdini the most enterprising and strong-willed will have formed themselves into an escape committee. The more cerebral will have quietly settled in and accepted their fate while yet another section will have begun plotting a series of rebellious low jinks.

Football managers, of course, have another agenda, to keep their players from temptation, monitor what they eat and drink and have unlimited time to talk tactics. But, even if the camps test only the ingenuity of both captives and captives in an endless battle of wits, it serves both to boost morale and entertainingly fill the dead time between matches.

No story illustrates this better than the one at Hendon Hall in 1964, when seven England players, including the captain Bobby Moore and, inevitably, Jimmy Greaves, slipped out for a drink and returned an hour late. Believing they had escaped censure when they returned to a hotel in darkness, each man found his passport lying on his bed.

It was the most subtle of final warnings by the manager Alf Ramsey, letting them know they had got away with nothing and that next time they would be international history. It also had more effect than an undisciplined shouting match on players who admired Ramsey for the way he handled their indiscipline.

Poor old Greaves, already developing a thirst that necessitated a transfer from the players' drinking school to the journalists', was one of the first British players to experience the Latin training camp when he moved to Inter

Milan in 1960. He dates his descent into alcoholism from the day he signed the contract, and he once almost killed himself trying to escape by climbing along a window ledge three storeys up, only to find it came to a dead end.

Other players have developed more subtle methods. Garrincha, the great Brazilian winger, was not going to let anyone restrict his diet of booze and women, even though Joao Saldanha regu-

larly checked his room when they were in camp. Saldanha, not wishing to wake his charge, would peep round the bedroom door and be satisfied by a glimpse of Garrincha's distinctive check shorts.

Only years later did Garrincha, known as The Little Bird, confess that he used to pay a team-mate to sleep in his bed wearing the shorts. And during the 1958 World Cup finals in Sweden he regularly sneaked out of camp to make love with a variety of partners in a rowing boat.

Using the long-established metaphor of sport and war, incarcinating and observing players in training camps is as good a way as any to analyse how they might behave in the line of fire. If billeting men together in such a way that they are encouraged to share their thoughts, secrets, fears and ambitions produces camaraderie in times of war, why should it not do the same for the mock battlefield of sport?

With a good book as an ideal night out, albeit in luxurious surroundings. When Don Revie was England manager, he had probably the two worst ideas ever devised by a national coach to forge team spirit: carpet bowls and bingo.



Boredom also helped bring about one of the greatest World Cup stories in Bogotá in 1970, where England had stopped en route to the finals in Mexico. Fed up with waiting for their rooms to be allocated at the Hotel Tequendama, Bobby Moore, Bobby

Charlton and Peter Thompson wandered across the road to a jewellers' shop. After they left, Moore was accused of stealing a bracelet.

Paul Gascoigne was so bored in the few days that England were in Rome last October preparing for the game against Italy which clinched the team's World Cup place that he went out to watch a movie. He walked out of the cinema, unable to understand the film because it was in Italian.

Some of the harmless, even

legless, pranks in training camp can help to bond a group of individuals into a team of unquenchable spirit. England's players were vilified after their drunken antics in the dentist's chair in Hong Kong, their "training camp" before Euro 96. But the alcohol turned out to have less effect on their bodies than the criticism had on their spirit and determination, forging a healthy "them against us" appetite to succeed.

Scots' doctor warns of lawsuits if injured players are ordered off before treatment

Patrick Glenn in St Remy-de-Provence

THE Scots arrived at their World Cup training base here yesterday with a fully fit squad and their traditional optimism buoyed by reports of infighting among the Brazilians who will be their first opponents next week. But there was at least one worried man in the travelling party.

Professor Stuart Hillis, the team's chief medical officer, has voiced his fear that FIFA's instructions to referees on the treatment of injured players could lead to litigation. Hillis, who has also been vice-chairman of UEFA's medical commission for five years, is worried that, as things stand, referees will not allow injured players to be treated on the pitch, instead having them removed immediately.

If a player sustains long-term damage as a result of being denied immediate attention, court action may follow. Hillis has expressed his anxiety in letters to FIFA and UEFA in which he asked for clarification of the rules. The reply said there would be a minor modification in the instruction to referees: players should be "stabilised" before being moved from the pitch.

On the journey here yesterday Hillis recalled that he is the only doctor ever to be ordered off for trying to treat a player. It happened in Japan three years ago, during Scotland's warm-up games for the European Championship qualifiers.

"It was in Toyama," said Hillis, "and I tried to get on to look after Rob McKinnon, the Motherwell player. The referee literally ordered me off. That won't happen in this World Cup. If I think a player needs attention where he lies and

the referee gets obstructive, I will overrule him and fulfil my primary responsibility, which is the care of the player."

Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, has also consulted Hugh Dallas, Scotland's leading referee, for last-minute advice and was told that officials will err on the side of stringency.

"Hugh made a good point," said Brown. "Top referees are just like the teams themselves in that they too want to progress in the tournament. The referees know they'll be bombed out if they are not seen to be applying FIFA's instructions as keenly as the governing body requires."

What FIFA are trying to do is protect the skilful players from the hammer-throaters. It's an admirable objective but it's going to cause difficulties. At least it applies to everybody and we all have to be prepared for it."

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Rugby League

Troubled McRae denies St Helens crisis

Impatient Saints drop Goulding

WITH the alarm bells already clanging for St Helens after three defeats in their last four games, the omission of their former captain Bobbie Goulding for the second successive week has compounded the air of uncertainty surrounding the 1998 Super League champions and their coach, Shaun McRae.

Saints have left out the Great Britain scrum-half for tomorrow's trip to Castleford Tigers, having dropped him for last weekend's defeat by Leeds Rhinos in favour of Sean Long, who continues in his stead. "Last week Bobbie was injured," said McRae. "He is now available for selection but I haven't selected him."

The imminent return to Knowsley Road of Eric Hughes — the man sacked to make way for McRae in 1994 — as football manager has, in many eyes, undermined the Australian, whose two-year contract expires at the end of this season.

McRae is refusing to panic. "I don't think it's a crisis time," he insisted. "I think there is a realisation that this competition is open to anybody."

Karl Hammond, the £150,000-listed Great Britain utility player, is back in the starting line-up at loose forward. He replaces Apollo Parrelli, with Damien Smith recovered from a knee injury and returning to the centre in place of Andy Haigh.

Castleford gained their first away win in Super League when they triumphed 18-8 at Salford last Sunday but the coach Stuart Raper is aware that the Tigers have yet to fulfil the promise demonstrated in their Challenge Cup run.

Wigan conceded a rare league double to Salford last year but have the chance to gain revenge on their former scrum-half Andy Gregory, whose Reds side have lost their last three games to drop out of the top five. Another former Wigan favourite, Andy Platt, returns from injury to lead Salford, who include two 19-year-olds in the goal-kicking three-quarter Robert Russell and the hooker Malcolm Alke.

Elsewhere, Bradford seek to retain their unbeaten away record when they visit Warrington tomorrow evening and London Broncos aim to avenge last September's humiliating 56-16 home Premiership defeat by Sheffield Eagles when John Kear's men made their first trip to London since their Wembley success five weeks ago.

In Brisbane, the New South Wales Blues atoned in style for their 24-23 home defeat in the opening match of the best-of-three State of Origin series with a record-equaling 26-10 win over Queensland.

Given the perfect start by Wendell Sailor's third-minute try, New South Wales crossed the line five times, their centre Paul McGregor doing so twice, to equal their biggest winning margin since the Maroons since the series began in 1980. Their final points tally was only one short of their highest in the competition. The deciding match will be played at the Sydney Football Stadium on June 19.

Queensland: Lockyer, Sing, Renou, Smith, Saker, Walters, Langer (capt), Barton, Thorn, McInnes, Delaty, Wetherington, Webbe, Substitutes: Price, Lang, Ikin, Carroll, New South Wales: Brasher, Whait, Cunningham, Hill, Macdonald, Delaty, Joseph, Jones, Foster, Kooze, Pay, Hoggan, Murray, Ryan, Sedgman, McGregor, Laidlaw, Barnhill, Menzies, Referee: B. Harrison.

Motor Sport

Makinen takes the Finnish line

David Williams on a success story that continues into the Acropolis Rally

THIS weekend sees the start of the Acropolis Rally, whose gravel roads are as tight as the championship leaderboards. Only eight points separate the current top five, and the leaders Carlos Sainz and Colin McRae, on 28 and 26 points respectively, will be keeping a close eye on their rivals during tomorrow's first leg which takes them from Athens to Delphi.

Only four points behind the leaders the reigning world champion Tommi Makinen should be full of confidence as it seems that the world is full of corners that are forever Finnish.

After 35 years during which Finns have won virtually every major rally, there was a routine element to Makinen's success in the Rally of Argentina last month. Yet his triumph was also a landmark victory for his country, as it was the 100th time a Finn had won a world championship rally.

Stuart Turner, the legendary Mini team manager who first exploited Finnish potential, is quick to point out that the Swedes were every bit as successful in the 1960s, before the world championship began, but the consistent success of a nation of five million people with no car industry of its own is a phenomenon.

The Finns argue that their past has bred a race of steady individuals, better suited to sports such as skiing and rallying than team games. Yet if there is something different

about Finns it is a collective, not an individual will, for they are not so much nationalistic as tribal. However ferocious the competition between them, they help one another in a way quite foreign to rally drivers in any other part of the world.

Just as Juha Kankkunen, the world's most successful living driver with four world titles to his name, was aided by Timo Makinen, a star of the 1980s, so the current Kankkunen in turn helped Tommi Makinen, no relation but a near-neighbour in central Finland. Sticking together is a vital characteristic, given rallying's lack of a coherent structure for developing newcomers.

Yet despite Kankkunen's and the younger Makinen's successes, the Finns' assumption of superiority is no longer shared by team managers in a sport where car manufacturers call the shots.

"Let's say you have five drivers that are about the same capability, I would rather go to a market that is interesting rather than Finland or Sweden," says the Swedish president of Toyota's rally team, Ove Andersson.

It is a wounding verdict but not one that the Finns are taking lying down. The Finnish Motorsport Federation is providing systematic coaching that encompasses everything from sports psychology to English lessons. There is nothing remotely like it in the rallying world.

Above all there is the power of example. Just as Vatanen was inspired by Timo Makinen's first Monte Carlo Rally win, there will be children transfixed by today's leading names and there is every reason to suppose the Finns will continue to be the rallying equivalent of the All Blacks.



Sticking with it... England, underdogs after being deprived of 15 Lions, prepare for today's international against Australia in Brisbane's Suncorp stadium

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID ROGERS

Saracens up for the crusade

A London quartet may jazz things up in Brisbane, says Robert Armstrong

IT IS a racing certainty that Saracens, with a record four players in the England line-up, will stage a private celebration if Clive Woodward's highly experimental side upset the bookmakers by beating Australia on their own turf in today's international at Brisbane's Suncorp stadium. No England team has ever defeated the Wallabies in Australia but try telling that to the captain Tony Diprose, the lock Danny Grewcock and the new captain Stuart Raper, who will be ever so politely they will suggest that history is bunk.

The give-it-and-go Saracens influence has pervaded the 38-man tour party in a way that would have been unthinkable 12 months ago. Putting players into space at pace has become an article of faith in the England coaching almanac, soon that philosophy will be second nature to every player involved in Woodward's build-up to next year's World Cup.

The reason Saracens are so heavily represented in Woodward's long-term plans is that the Tetley's Bitter Cup winners are the chief standard-bearers of the flexible all-purpose game that has lit up the English domestic scene. Never mind Newcastle winning the Premiership; England are fully committed to multi-skilled fitters and carriers like Diprose and his club-mates.

Grewcock, for instance, may be regarded as a hard man because he refuses to neglect the basics in contact situations, yet few English locks are capable of making a transfer and supporting the backs with his remarkable speed of mind and body. Similarly Diprose possesses the driving power of an outstanding Test No. 8 yet he regards his ability to make the hard yards as merely the foundation of the quick, adaptable style required to prosper in the southern hemisphere.

Clearly there is a danger it could all go horribly wrong for England should the dynamic Wallaby forwards John Eales, David Wilson and Phil Kearns be granted the freedom to go on a roll. But Stuart

Five new players to watch

Steve Ravenscroft
Saracens
Centre
Age 27

Ravenscroft was once considered a dependable club three-quarter but little else. But the arrival of Philippe Sella to Saracens two years ago has transformed his game. Much travelled, Ravenscroft has played in New Zealand for North Harbour Under-21s. Has also played for England Schools and Students. His tackling will be crucial to the three-quarter line.



Spencer Brown
Richmond
Wing
Age 24

Brown is a one-time musician in two Marnes. Stodgy and clumsy, last season he was overshadowed by the exploits of Richmond club-mate Dominic Chapman, the Premiership's top scorer, as a broken jaw just before Christmas restricted his league outings to 11. But highly rated by Clive Woodward.



Scott Benton
Gloucester
Scrum-half
Age 23

Yorkshire-born Benton wins his first cap after his captain Matt Dawson pulled out. Has spent three seasons at Kingston where his coach Richard Hill, the former England No. 9, has helped him enormously. A year ago he was fifth in the England scrum-half pecking-order but his tactical kicking and swift pass have helped expand Gloucester's traditional 10-man game.



Richard Pool-Jones
Stade Francaise
Open-side flanker
Age 28

England have revived the tradition of Nigel Horner and Maurice Colclough in picking a forward from the tough-rudded world of French club rugby. Pool-Jones, a late replacement for Neil Back, has just helped Stade Francaise to the French title. The former Wigan is a specialist No. 7 whose career has been troubled by two bad knee injuries. Will add pace to the back row.



Benny Owen
Saracens
Blind-side flanker
Age 24

One of Sturnham's former jobs as a bouncer could come in handy in the ultra-physical confrontations in the southern hemisphere. Has only really had his opportunity in the latter half of Saracens' season following a back injury to the Lions flanker Richard Hill. Sturnham, playing with St Albans three years ago, has seized his chance and was outstanding in the Tetley's Bitter Cup final win last month.



ham, England's blind-side flanker, is not prepared to contemplate the possibility that he might have to play much of the 80 minutes without the ball.

"Clive looks upon me as a ball-carrier who will break tackles, take it up and get into a position to recycle possession," he said. "He also expects me to be strong in defence as well as playing a constructive role in the line-out."

"It's definitely good to go out there and play my first international against opponents who hardly know anything about me. I'm glad I

haven't been hyped up by the press.

"I am on a big learning curve and hopefully this tour will help me carry that process forward. I've improved my defence and my fitness thanks to the advice of Francois Pienaar. I love going forward with the ball."

"Mark Evans [Saracens' director of rugby] felt I had the ability to come through provided I trained hard. I've managed to do that and, though I've never played in the southern hemisphere before, I have a good idea what to expect from watching the Super 12 series on TV."

Now 24, Sturnham was given his chance by Saracens in March when Richard Hill had surgery on a persistent back injury. The new boy was doubly fortunate: Pienaar was his back-row team-mate as well as his coach. The South African's ambition to make Saracens the most progressive side in Britain chimed perfectly with Woodward's desire to take England away from rugby by numbers.

The promotion of the 27-year-old Ravenscroft, a loyal club servant who was not even on a list of England possibilities until last month, sent out the right kind of signal to

every aspiring international in the land. If the unsung Saracens centre could go the distance, there was bound to be hope for other solid professionals such as Dave Sims, Stuart Potter and Jos Baxendale, who are all in the tour party.

"It's a fantastic challenge to win my first cap against Australia," declared Ravenscroft. "I shall aim to make my defence strong, to maintain straight lines of running and to make breaks when they are on. I've benefited from Philippe Sella's massive influence. It has been a privilege to be part of a club set-up that

many people acknowledge is at the forefront of professional rugby."

Ravenscroft, of course, represents an important link between the amateur era and the new professionalism funded by Saracens' owner Nigel Wray. Separate spells of club rugby in New Zealand and South Africa were the closest he had come to the international experience that tends to sort out the men from the boys.

"I've just completed my eighth season with Saracens and I'm pleased to have seen through the fundamental changes that have taken place," he said. "In the process I've been able to project myself and make the big step up from club rugby."

Public interest here in what is rightly perceived to be an under-strength England team is limited — only 30,000 are likely to turn up at the 42,000 all-seater stadium — but the Wallabies understand that failure to gain a substantial win may be deeply embarrassing. They too are building a new side.

As Woodward remarked yesterday: "There is huge pressure on Australia to win; after all, everyone here is aware that we have lost a total of 15 Lions due to injury and family reasons. That won't matter at all in the Test: we obviously need to lay down the standards of this tour with a convincing performance."

Evans sues Merle over injuries

RICKY EVANS, the former Wales rugby international, will claim damages against the France player Olivier Merle in the Paris High Court on Monday, lawyers confirmed yesterday.

The former prop received a broken nose and leg injuries in the incident during a Five Nations Championship game in January 1995. His writ claims damages for the injuries, loss of earnings and medical expenses.

Evans, 37, who played for Llanelli and now coaches at Cardiff, had a steel plate inserted in his ankle and

was forced out of the game for more than four months, missing three internationals. He needed further surgery and did not regain his international place. He had won 19 caps for his country.

His Swansea-based solicitor Mark Harvey said the French judge would watch a video of the incident, which happened at Parc des Princes, and was expected to reserve his ruling for about a month. "Whatever the outcome, an appeal is likely to follow."

Merle, nicknamed "The Mountain of Iron", has said that Evans' injuries were

caused accidentally in a tackle which was not penalised by the referee.

A hamstring injury has forced the centre Jonathan Bell out of Ireland's tour of South Africa. He will join the prop Reggie Corrigan and the wing James Topping, also injured, on a flight home this weekend.

Ireland will not call for a replacement for him unless there are further injuries in today's match against Western Province.

Mark Taylor will replace one of his heroes today when Wales meet Zimbabwe in the opening match of

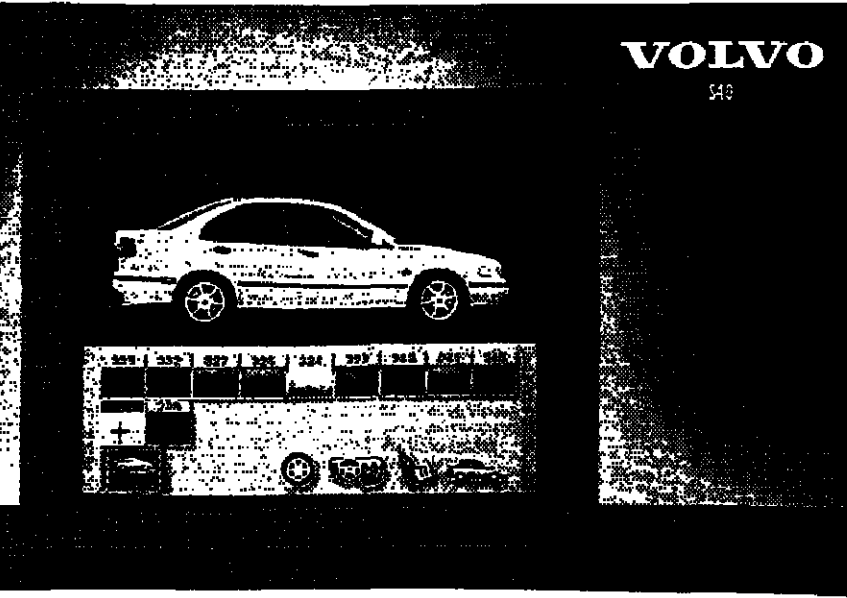
their six-game tour of southern Africa. He steps into Allan Bateman's shoes at centre in a team without Bateman's fellow Lions Scott Gibbs and Neil Jenkins.

The Heineken Cup is set to be fortified by four Super 12 teams next season to compensate for the English clubs' boycott. The tournament's organiser, European Rugby Ltd, says talks are being held with the Australian, New Zealand and South African unions about turning the Heineken Cup into a money-spinning world series tournament.

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22 SPORTS NEWS

Racing: Derby Day

Cape Verdi should prove too classy for the colts

Ron Cox goes for a Godolphin one-two with their star filly showing the way home

GODOLPHIN, home to the cream of Sheikh Mohammed's vast racing empire, have revolutionised training methods ever since Balanchine burst on the classic scene in 1994. At Epsom today when Cape Verdi takes on the colts in the Vodafone Derby.

The record books are against them and the wet weather has not helped either. But, even if £75,000 is a drop in the ocean for a man of Sheikh Mohammed's means, the decision to supplement Cape Verdi for that five-figure sum surely shows that the colts closest to the filly are convinced she is equal to the task.

Much has been made of the fact that Pagselle, in 1912, was the last filly to win the Epsom Derby — Fifiella (1916) won a war-time substitute run at Newmarket — but since 1919 only five fillies have run in the race and none would be as classy as Cape Verdi.

Even Nobiliary, who finished second to Grundy in 1975.

In last month's 1,000 Guineas it was a case of Cape Verdi first, the rest nowhere. She stormed clear to win by

five lengths in a fast time and is bred to stay a mile and a half. As Simon Crisford, Godolphin's racing manager, says: "She has the class to win the race and we haven't seen anything yet to suggest she won't stay."

We can be sure the Godolphin team have given Cape Verdi the right sort of build-up for the extra half-mile, and here comparisons with Balanchine are useful.

Like Cape Verdi, she was bought out of Peter Chappell's stable after her two-year-old career. Both fillies were held in the highest regard at Manton, and after a narrow defeat in the 1,000 Guineas, Balanchine went on to win the Oaks and then beat the colts in the Irish Derby.

The form she showed at The Curragh suggested Balanchine would have won that year's Epsom Derby had she contested it, and one cannot help but feel this has influenced the Sheikh's decision to run Cape Verdi.

Salsabil, another recent Oaks winner owned by the Maktoum family, also won the Irish Derby. The 5th sex allowance which Cape Verdi receives from the colts

equates to a couple of lengths, and unless the ground becomes really testing she can make every pound tell.

Casting an eye around the opposition, it would appear Godolphin have most of the angles covered, for they also run City Honours, runner-up to Saratoga Springs in normally one of the best Derby trials, the Dante Stakes at York.

However, there was never any doubt that Frankie Dettori would ride Cape Verdi. For the simple reason she is known to be lengths superior to her stable companion.

The Dante form took a bit of a knock when Saratoga Springs could finish only fourth in the French Derby last Sunday. But City Honours looks sure to improve for the run and for the step up in distance. He should confirm York form with third-placed Border Arrow.

Saratoga Springs, re-equipped with a visor which he wore twice last season, is tough enough to run his race after his recent trip to Chantilly. However, one cannot help feeling he would not be lining up if all was well with trainer Aidan O'Brien's top two colts, King Of Kings and Second Empire.

King Of Kings impressed in the 2,000 Guineas, but does not look a stayer. He surprisingly

bypassed the Irish Guineas in favour of Second Empire, who was given the kid-glove treatment by Charlie Roche after an interrupted preparation owing to a muscle problem.

Potential Derby winners can ill afford such hold-ups in their training schedule, but there will be other days for Second Empire.

Michael Stoute, on the other hand, has enjoyed a clear run with Greek Dance, deliberately avoiding Group races to build up the colt's confidence.

In winning a Newmarket maiden and the Glasgow Stakes at York, Greek Dance has followed the path taken by Commander In Chief on his way to winning the 1993 Derby. Greek Dance is improving all the time and with the combined expertise of Stoute — two Derby winners — and jockey Walter Swinburn, who has ridden three, he looks sure to run well.

On breeding, Greek Dance is a guaranteed stayer. But the same cannot be said of Haami, the Guinness fifth, while Gulland will have to be ridden more patiently than at Chester, where he scrambled home from The Glow-Worm. Distant Mirage, third there, did nothing for the form when only seventh in the Italian Derby last weekend.

Courteous, who has pleased trainer Paul Cole since winning the Thresher Classic Trial at Sandown by six lengths, and High-Rise, who did well to edge out Sadian at Lingfield in a six-runner race, look to suit him, are outsiders who could make the necessary improvement to be in the shake-up.

But soft ground may prove the only threat to Cape Verdi (3.45). Provided it remains good, she can show the way to stable companion City Honours and Greek Dance.

Regal performance... King Of Kings (left) winning the 2,000 Guineas from Lend A Hand and Haami, who finished fifth

Doncaster

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The Guardian Saturday June 6 1998

Racing: Oaks Day

Chris Hawkins sees Aidan O'Brien's Irish raider bounce back to form in the fillies' Classic at Epsom yesterday

Shahtoush answers Kinane's calls

SHAHTOUSH paid a big compliment to a big competitor, when winning the Vodafone Oaks for the irrepressible stable of Aidan O'Brien at Epsom yesterday.

Cape Verdi had beaten Shahtoush by five lengths at Newmarket, but that form was largely ignored by punters and on Wednesday the Irish filly stood at 33-1.

Value-seekers moved in to shorten that to 12-1 but the worry was that after Newmarket Shahtoush had been well beaten in the Irish Guineas, a defeat put down to firm ground by jockey Mick Kinane, who explained that he eased her once her chance had gone at The Curragh.

There was no question of easing off yesterday as Shahtoush came to join battle with Bahr a furlong out. She found plenty under pressure to prevail by three-quarters of a length, with the non-staying Midnight Line six lengths away third.

"The plan was to drop her out and let her settle," said Kinane. "She was always travelling sweetly and she must have given Bahr a hell of a shock when we went by — he thought he had them all covered."

Detlori certainly looked confident two furlongs out as he sat waiting to press the button on Bahr, having allowed Midnight Line to lead on sufferance. But when the time came to go the Godolphin filly could not match Shahtoush's finishing kick.

There has been criticism of Detlori this season for not being a hungry enough horse, with hindsight he might have kicked a little earlier here.

So O'Brien and the John Magnier syndicate won their second Classic of the season following King Of Kings in the 2,000 Guineas, but you



Epsom sorts... Mick Kinane comes late and fast on Shahtoush (left) to beat Bahr in yesterday's Oaks

PHOTOGRAPH: JULIAN HERBERT ALLESTREE

would hardly think so to see their unsmiling faces afterwards. Maybe they were too busy with their mental calculations.

Magnier makes no secret that racing is primarily business. "This is what the game is all about, winning the Group One with your horses as two-year-olds and the Classics at three," he said.

"But we are lucky to have a man like Aidan. His head is still the same size and always will be. It's that which endears him to everyone. It is a pleasure to work with him." Simon Crisford, of Godolphin, had no complaints about the way Bahr was ridden and expects the filly to go for the Irish Oaks where she could meet the winner again.

If so it will be interesting to see what tactics are used. Midnight Line, backed down to favourite, disappointed Henry Cecil and will now be dropped back to a mile and a quarter.

In the Coronation Cup Silver Patriarch made a non-sense of any notions that he lacked acceleration when swooping to beat Swain in

thrilling style. Pat Eddery got a tremendous run out of the grey who failed to handle the hill and looked to have no chance at Tattenham Corner. "He just took off when he hit the rising ground," said Eddery. "It was the same feeling as last year's Derby when he flew but didn't quite get up."

John Dunlop will aim Silver Patriarch at Ascot's King George and the Arc, races that now look within the compass of this tough, courageous horse who had previously given the impression of needing more than a mile and a half. On a more orthodox track he is going to take some beating, though he clearly needs time to find his rhythm.

SPORTS NEWS 23

HORSE SENSE

Written by those in the know

LAMBOURN trainer Kevin McAluliffe provided one of the biggest shocks seen at Royal Ascot in recent years when producing Tipplit Boy to win last season's Norfolk Stakes at 23-1.

Among the speediest of the stable's current crop of juveniles is the College Chapel colt, Riverdance. Whether he proves to be Royal Ascot material only time will tell, but Riverdance is expected to go very close on his next start following a highly promising debut run behind Kaamen at Newbury.

Back on song Peter Chapple-Hyam has pencilled in the Ballymacoll Stud Stakes at Newbury next Thursday for Charroux, who is back on form, having missed her intended engagement in the Cheshire Oaks.

Charroux got stuck in the mud when a beaten favourite at Sandown in April, but on home form will leave that effort a long way behind when she encounters better ground.

Tamariak put himself bang on target for the Cork And Orrery Stakes at Royal Ascot with a fluent win over six furlongs at Lingfield last weekend. The colt took time to recover from his exertions in the 2,000 Guineas and should come on again for his Lingfield run.

Charlton will unleash a decent two-year-old any day now in the shape of Forante. We gather she should be a bit special.

Liabilities After Walter Swinburn had won on Brandon Jack and Caribbean Monarch at Windsor on Monday night, bookmakers faced hefty liabilities on the jockey's fast-race ride Karasi, and the Michael Stoute-trained three-year-old was sent off a false favourite — 13-8 in a 25-runner field.

Karasi could only finish fourth behind Cloak Of Darkness. That is probably as good as he is, but the runner who set tongues wagging was eighth-placed Vrin, the second string of Luca Cumani, who saddled Cregon to take third.

Friendless in the market, but the pick of the paddock, Vrin stayed on nicely in the closing stages and stable insiders confirm he is worth keeping an eye on.

Incidentally, if Cavaliere, favourably mentioned here a fortnight ago, has since left the Cumani yard to join Mary Reveley's stable, he can prove a useful addition to arguably the best dual-purpose outfit in the country.

John Gosden's horses seem to be taking an age to find any sort of form this season. When they do, look out for the three-year-old Cadette. We hear highly encouraging reports of this unraced Arazi colt.

Return to form No Warning made no mistake when romping home by eight lengths at Wolverhampton last week, signalling the return to form of Sir Mark Prescott's team. He looks smart, but we understand stable companion Hyphen could be even better.

Chris Wall has his team in good form. The Newmarket-based filly has yet to win a race with Face-Off, but that could all change at Salisbury next Wednesday. This filly has benefited from her recent pipe-opener at Newbury.

After the dust has settled on today's Derby, don't overlook Banting in the following race at Epsom, the Vodafone Surrey Stakes. We understand this colt has really pleased the bookmakers in his recent finishing fifth in the German 2,000 Guineas.

Saturday special FABLED LIGHT (4.15 Doncaster)

Newmarket tonight

RON COX	TOP FORM
6.40 Sweet Classic	Sweet Classic
7.05 Bert's Girl	Bert's Girl
7.25 Royal Anthem	Royal Anthem
7.45	7.45
8.05	8.05
8.25	8.25
8.45	8.45
9.05	9.05

Galloping past 20m with right-hand bend at halfway. Straight course of 13m.

Going: Good. 20m with right-hand bend at halfway. Straight course of 13m.

Drum: No advantage.

Long distance travellers: Sweet Classic (6.40) P. Bowen, Dyfed, 274 miles.

Seven day winners: None.

Blackbird or winner first time None.

6.40 LADIES' HANDICAP (1m 4f 25.43s (14 declared))

RON COX	TOP FORM
6.40 Sweet Classic	Sweet Classic
7.05 Bert's Girl	Bert's Girl
7.25 Royal Anthem	Royal Anthem
7.45	7.45
8.05	8.05
8.25	8.25
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6.40 LADIES' HANDICAP (1m 4f 25.43s (14 declared))

Worcester National Hunt programme

RON COX	TOP FORM
6.40 Sweet Classic	Sweet Classic
7.05 Bert's Girl	Bert's Girl
7.25 Royal Anthem	Royal Anthem
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8.25	8.25
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Going: Good. 20m with right-hand bend at halfway. Straight course of 13m.

Drum: No advantage.

Long distance travellers: Sweet Classic (6.40) P. Bowen, Dyfed, 274 miles.

Seven day winners: None.

Blackbird or winner first time None.

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6.40 LADIES' HANDICAP (1m 4f 25.43s (14 declared))

Wolverhampton (A.W.) tonight

RON COX	TOP FORM
6.40 Sweet Classic	Sweet Classic
7.05 Bert's Girl	Bert's Girl
7.25 Royal Anthem	Royal Anthem
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Going: Good. 20m with right-hand bend at halfway. Straight course of 13m.

Drum: No advantage.

Long distance travellers: Sweet Classic (6.40) P. Bowen, Dyfed, 274 miles.

Seven day winners: None.

Blackbird or winner first time None.

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Full of dash... Frankie Dettori and Cape Verdi win the 1000 Guineas while below, Shahtoush (outside) wins Oaks at Epsom

PHOTOGRAPH: JULIAN HEBERT

Cape's fear: rain and the maiden

Chris Hawkins on a lone lady whom the world's best will attempt to steer clear of the colts and into Derby folklore today

MORE than £40 million is expected to be bet nationwide on today's Vodafone Derby at Epsom and most of the money will be on Frankie Dettori and Cape Verdi.

The Italian has never won the Derby and it is 82 years since a filly triumphed in the Classic, when Fildella won a wartime version at Newmarket in 1916. In the race's 218-year history only six fillies have won, but only 82 have run.

Cape Verdi was not originally entered but after she cantered to victory in the 1,000 Guineas her owners, Sheikh Maktoum and Sheikh Mohammed, stumped up £75,000 to "supplement" her — that is, bought into the race at the eleventh hour. To bypass the Oaks, the traditional Epsom Classic for members of her sex, and pit her against the colts is a bold move but her trainer Saeed bin Suroor believes she is a racing machine.

"She's a professional and has class so why not accept the challenge and take on the colts?" said Sheikh Mohammed, adding in his best English sporting lingo that he would be "over the moon" if she won. Only one filly, Tagalie in 1912, has won the one-mile 1,000 Guineas and then the Derby over an extra four furlongs, but on breeding Cape Verdi should be suited to the longer distance.

Dettori believes she will stay: "The way she relaxes and then gradually builds up her pace makes me think she will get the extra distance. The biggest danger is the other jockeys. The Derby can be rough."

Keeping her out of trouble will be his job but there is nothing he can do about the weather and any rain will damage her chance.

Cape Verdi will not be suited by soft going; her sire Caerleon hated it and show-ers are forecast for the south of England today.

Rivalling the Maktoum family as the dominant force in British racing is the John Magnier syndicate based at Aidan O'Brien's Ballydoyle stable in Ireland. O'Brien, 28 but quite

easily confused for 18, is a young genius who won the 2,000 Guineas with King Of Kings.

This majestic colt is only one of three he runs in the race. Second Empire and Saratoga Springs, fourth in the French Derby last Sunday, make up the Magnier strike force.

There are others with chances: Greek Dance, ridden by Walter Swinburn fresh from his battle with weight and alcohol problems, High Rise, Hamai and Courtious. Although 14 cut-a-dash colts versus one dusky maiden.



Dettori... no Derby wins

Shahtoush (outside) wins Oaks at Epsom

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Vodafone Derby Stakes

1. Frankie Dettori (IRE) Cape Verdi (GB) 1000 Guineas (1000 Guineas)	9. Shahtoush (GB) Oaks (1000 Guineas)
2. John Magnier (IRE) King Of Kings (GB) 2000 Guineas (2000 Guineas)	10. High Rise (GB) Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)
3. Walter Swinburn (GB) Greek Dance (GB) Saratoga Springs (GB) Second Empire (GB) 1000 Guineas (1000 Guineas)	11. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)
4. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)	12. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)
5. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)	13. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)
6. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)	14. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)
7. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)	15. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)
8. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)	16. Hamai (GB) Courtious (GB) 14 cut-a-dash colts (14 cut-a-dash colts)



Shahtoush (outside) wins Oaks at Epsom

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Shahtoush (outside) wins Oaks at Epsom

Shahtoush (outside) wins Oaks at Epsom

Our Father in heaven? Well, over the moon at least

THIS SPORTING LIFE

Harry Pearson

IT is often said that football is like a religion. These days some people clearly see that as an understatement — the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, for one. Dr Carey is a football fan, though clearly not one of the mad, obsessive sort who sell their dog to a glue factory to raise cash for a pair of fluffy slippers shaped like Ryan Giggs and earn a starring role in a television documentary in the process.

Unlike so many supporters, Dr Carey has a sense of proportion. To prove this he recently gave a sermon in which he suggested that, to many modern Britons, football is no longer simply like a religion. Nowadays it is a religion, or at least a substitute religion, one I imagine people bring off the bench in the last 10 minutes in the desperate hope that it will magically conjure up an equaliser to signal a period of extra-time. A bit like Michael Owen.

Dr Carey said these things because he is worried about the diminishing crowds at Church of England fixtures. Apparently, CoE attendances have shrunk so much that other denominations now turn up on Sunday mornings and taunt the congregation by singing "Come in a taxi, you must have come in a taxi". Football, Dr Carey feels, is part of the problem.

A personal view is that instead of fretting, Dr Carey should encompass this latest phenomenon.

Vicars (renamed "gaffers") could be encouraged to preface each sermon by leading the congregation (or "the Font and" as it would henceforth be known) in a chant celebrating the Heavenly Father's omnipotence: "He's here, he's here, he's every-where, God Almighty, God Almighty".

I believe such moves would be welcomed, not just by the Archbishop's church but by the football religion as well. For the truth is that football too is going through a crisis. It seems that many younger supporters are unable any longer to find fulfilment through the traditional game with its

self-sacrifice, discipline and worship of Saint Gary the Good Example To Kids Up And Down The Country.

Disaffected youth have drifted off and begun dabbling with so-called New Age sports. This is a worry.

Although many elements beneath the New Age Sports umbrella, such as Enle's Personal Growth Encounter Group, Locating the Inner Child with Marcello Rios, and Eddie Irvine's Psychic Massage Teepee, are clearly well intentioned and beyond moral reproach, others are clearly not.

In recent months football's places of worship have been targeted by sinister groups whose often charismatic leaders prey on the weak, the feeble and the emotionally vulnerable (insert your own Man City joke here).

There are such cults as the Harri Carpenter Movement, a Far East End sect whose followers may be seen early in the morning jogging along the Old Kent Road chanting their mantra of "Harri Carpenter, Harri Carpenter, Gor bilney, what a lovely fella", and the Sallistologists, whose way of life is based on rhythm, grass

and patterned knitwear.

There is the Bhagwan Benda, whose followers spend all day trying to learn the ways of tantric ventriloquism so they may speak with their lips in the manner of their

leader; and, perhaps most frightening of all, NBA basketball.

Like the Church of England, football must ask how it is falling to the youngsters who get involved with such weird, not to say dangerous, fringe "sports".

Perhaps by joining together, these two powerful national institutions could provide a beacon for lost and morally rootless youth.

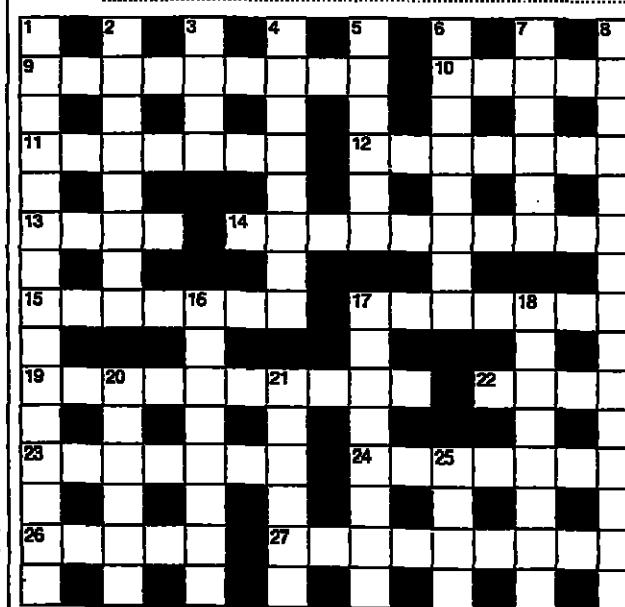
Then would the lion lie down with the lamb, and Christian football supporters would join in a celebratory chant of "We're going to heaven, we're going to heaven, you're not, you're not".

Perhaps Archbishop Carey might start by replacing the pulpit with a dug-out and set up a chain of superstores selling replica vestments

Guardian COLLINS Crossword 21,294

A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to The Guardian Crossword, P.O. Box 14641, London, EC3R 3JX, or Fax to 0171 713 4735 by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday June 15.

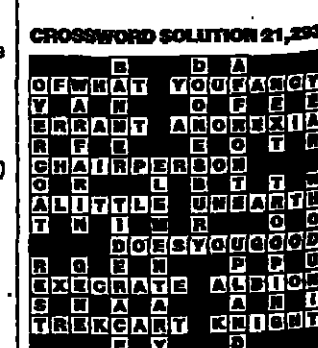
Name _____ Address _____



Set by Shed

- Across**
- The Soldier's Tale may be fixed (6)
 - Dodge laid returning to the point (5)
 - Flavours is included in a necessity (7)
 - Be rude about terrorists' protective clothing (7)
 - Attract attention in storm (4)
 - Evil One and its revolting box (10)
 - Herb loves to embrace young Lear (7)

- Down**
- Seat of emotion about to lose these out and explode (7,4)
 - Greeting detectives infiltrating mock post control (9)
 - Press taking top off egg (4)
 - Survivor of fire's retired and gone mad (9)
 - Make safe and secure, perhaps (5)
 - Wicked beauty full of wickedness (9)
 - I need force when mounting an expedition (9)
 - Heir in Aragon? Parent figure one's not welcome (7,3,5)
 - Tory carries margin in vote for rancour (5)
 - He forgets being cast as leonard (8)
 - Promoter of regularity having a hard time (9)
 - Dope to musical monologue King amnesty (5)
 - Grumpy Inspector eating duck (5)
 - Composer's endless rest (4)



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Boxing

Akinwande test positive for hepatitis

John Rawling in New York on a setback for Evander Holyfield

EVANDER Holyfield's defence of his World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation heavyweight titles was thrown into doubt last night after his challenger Henry Akinwande was found to have failed a blood test taken in a routine pre-flight medical examination.

The 35-year-old champion was about to begin his final pre-flight training session at Madison Square Garden when the news reached him through his attorney Jim Thomas, who reported that Akinwande had been told that he had the hepatitis virus. It was not immediately clear which strain had been identified, but first indications were that the fight would be called off.

Holyfield was in typically phlegmatic mood, and went through his full work-out routine before answering questions. "It's disappointing," he said with a mastery display of understatement, "to train 13 weeks and prepare yourself for a fight, and the day before this happens. It's a different thing when it's a week or two."

"Things happen in boxing, and you have to roll with the punches."

Holyfield's career can never be said to have been dull. In 1993, on his way to victory over Riddick Bowe, the fight was interrupted when a man driving a powered parachute crashed into the ring and caused a 90-minute delay. Then, last year, Mike Tyson was disqualified after biting his ears.

The prospect of a Holyfield-Akinwande meeting have not exactly set New York alight. With the promoter Don King

asking between \$100 and \$1,000 for tickets, sales have been slow. Yesterday only around 7,000 of the 17,000 seats had been sold.

For Akinwande, pulling out of the fight would cost him \$2.5 million (\$1.6 million) and the chance to erase from the memory his shabby disqualification against Lennox Lewis when they contested the World Boxing Council's title last July.

Whether or not the virus would merely cause a postponement or may threaten Akinwande's career needs medical clarification. The more virulent B, C, and D strains of the hepatitis virus could a career, while the milder A strain for which Ray Mercer also tested positive would be a setback from which an athlete could recover.

Holyfield is due to make a mandatory IBF title defence against another American heavyweight Vaughn Bean in his next fight, but the clam-

our began immediately for him to move towards the contest fans want, a unification match with Lewis.

Lewis is due to make a WBC title defence against the Croatian Zeljko Mavrovic, with the fight likely in September. But logic suggests Mavrovic and Bean may be paid to step aside, with the governing bodies demanding the fight the world wants to see.

Holyfield remains adamant he wants Lewis. "Hopefully it can happen. I always look for the best regardless of what takes place. I am in shape and I could take it now. I believe I can take anyone in the world," jokingly he added: "I feel I would have beaten Akinwande anyway. I should get the money [he has lost at least \$10 million from the likely postponement] but that's the way it is."

Akinwande is understood to have undergone a second blood test, and a press confer-

ence was due to be held last night to announce whether or not the bill, which includes a WBA middleweight title match which would see 46-year-old Robert Duran challenge William Joppy, can go ahead.

For the promoter Don King it is another damaging blow. He has been conspicuous by his absence this week as he continues to defend a fraud indictment in a Manhattan court, and he is soon to be locked in a legal wrangle with the former champion Mike Tyson, who is claiming \$100 million in lost earnings.

King's principal American rival Bob Arum has already sold 80,000 tickets for Oscar de la Hoya's WBC world wel-